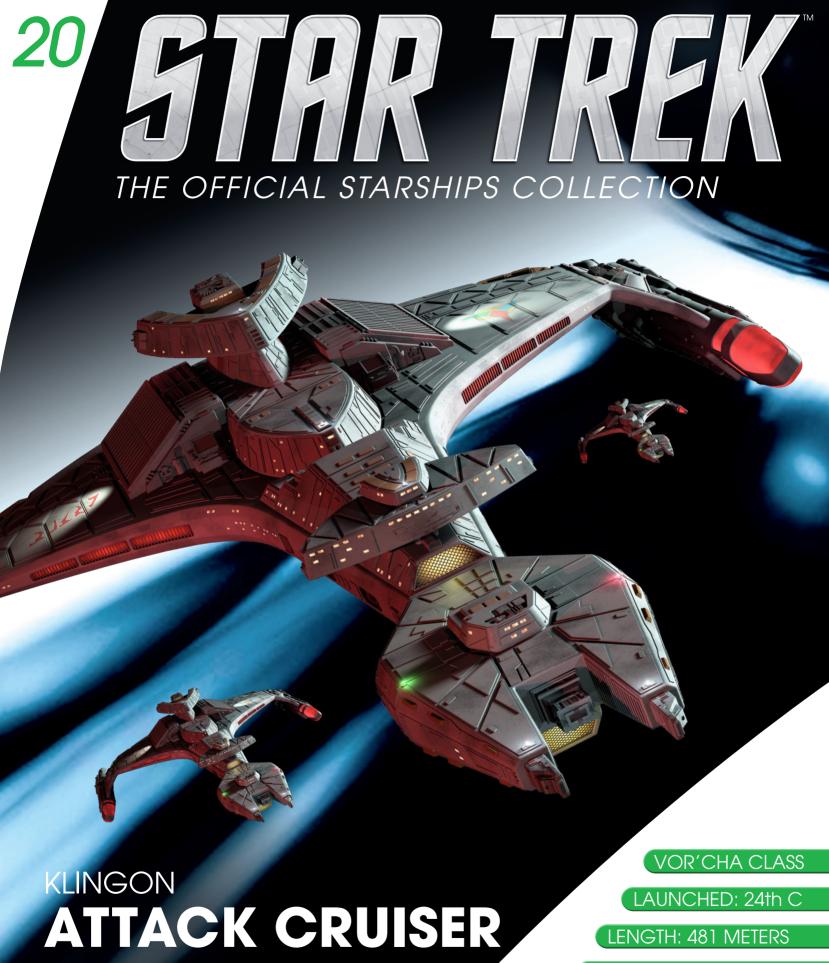
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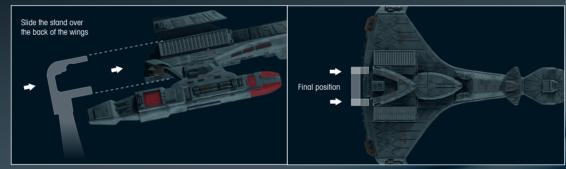
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VOR'CHA CLASS SPECIFICATION





DISRUPTOR CANNONS

PHOTON TORPEDO LAUNCHERS

WEAPONRY:

► The *Vor'cha* class was the most powerful ship in the Klingon fleet in the late 2360s. For a short time, a *Vor'cha*-class vessel acted as the flagship of the Klingon Empire.

KLINGON DEFENSE FORCE VORCEHACLASS

The *Vor'cha* class was a Klingon attack cruiser that saw action in several conflicts in the 24th century.

The Klingon Defense Force added the powerful Vor'cha-class attack cruiser to their fleet in the latter half of the 24th century. This new, more advanced class of starship was designed to replace the aging K't'inga-class battlecruiser that entered service nearly one hundred years earlier in the 2270s. At 481.32 meters in length, the Vor'cha class was more than 130 meters longer than its predecessor and could accommodate a crew numbering as many 1,900 personnel.

The overall design of the *Vor'cha* class was very recognizable as it incorporated the same basic shape as earlier Klingon ships, such as the *D7* and *K't'inga*-class battlecruisers. Like them, the bridge module at the front was separated from the main body by a long neck that flared out into wings, which contained the warp nacelles.

Although the *Vor'cha* class was of unmistakably Klingon design, it differed from their earlier classes of ship in several ways. The most obvious difference was a much flatter front head section. This contained a forked nose featuring the ship's primary disruptor cannon: an enormously powerful weapon that was capable of firing solid or intermittent disruptor beams. Other differences included a much thicker connecting neck between the front bridge module and main body, while there was also much more surface detail all over the hull, with heavy armor plate panels and slotted radiator blocks clearly visible.

SHARED TECHNOLOGY

A lasting period of peace between the Federation and the Klingon Empire following the Khitomer Accords of 2293 saw a sharing of technologies. This ultimately led to some aspects of Starfleet ship design translating into the hardware used in the construction of the *Vor'cha* class. This was most notable in the look and shape of the canted warp nacelles that featured Bussard collectors on the front of them.

The hull of the *Vor'cha* class was, at first, colored a much lighter green than the gritty, dark green of the *B'rel*-class *Bird-of-Prey* that was in service at the same time. This changed in the mid 2370s as more *Vor'cha*-class ships entered active duty and their color reverted to the darker green seen on other classes of Klingon ships.



DATA FEED

*Vor'cha-*class ships made up part of the Ninth Fleet during the Dominion War. This was a combined force of Alpha Quadrant ships led by General Martok.

✓ An exchange of technology between the Federation and the Klingons resulted in a new warp nacelle design on the *Vor'cha* class. Earlier Klingon ships featured rectangular nacelles that emitted a green or cyan color, but they were now more rounded and featured red Bussard collectors on the ends.





▲ The overall aggressive look of the Vor'cha class was matched by its fearsome firepower. The outer hull was also clad in heavy armor plating. By the time of the Dominion War many *Vor'cha*-class ships had feathers painted on their hulls.

Several Vor'cha-class ships were part of a fleet that launched an attack on Deep Space 9 in 2372, bringing an end to the Khitomer Accords.



▲ Many of the ship's functions could be accessed from an unmanned computer control room that was filled with consoles. The Klingon defense system database could also be accessed from here. As with earlier Klingon vessels, *Vor'cha*-class ships were equipped with cloaking devices that rendered them invisible to the naked eye and sensors, although they still could not fire when cloaked.

The interior of the *Vor'cha* class was much more spacious than other Klingon ships and featured at least 26 decks, although furnishings and decor were spartan as befitted the Klingon belief that harsh living conditions made them better warriors.

An armory was located in the upper half of the ship, and main engineering, which contained the reactor core, was on deck 26. *Vor'cha*-class ships also featured a computer control room that was normally unmanned. Given its importance, entry to the room was only possible through a DNA-based hand print verification lock. The computer consoles inside could be used to access the navigational control systems and the Klingon defense system database. These records also contained false files and databases of disinformation in the event that they were accessed by enemy spies.

VOR'CHA IN ACTION

Starfleet's earliest recorded encounter with a *Vor'cha*-class ship occurred in 2367 when one was serving as Chancellor K'mpec's flagship. It surprised the crew of the *U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D* by decloaking next to it while both ships were in the Gamma Arigulon system. The reason for the clandestine approach soon became apparent when K'mpec revealed that he was slowly being poisoned and wanted Captain Picard to act as the Arbiter of Succession when the Klingon High Council met to decide their next leader.



✓ When Chancellor K'mpec realised that he was dying he held talks with Captain Picard about his concerns for the future of the Klingon Empire aboard his flagship Vor'cha-class vessel.

► Vor'cha-class ships were often in the thick of the action during the battles that raged in the late 24th century. They proved vital in protecting their Empire.





Several Vor'cha-class ships were destroyed in suicide runs by Jem'Hadar ships in the First Battle of Chin'toka, but their sacrifice was not in vain. By this point they made up a significant part of the Klingon fleet.

► In 2373, the Klingon military headquarters was moved to Ty'Gokor, a heavily fortified planetoid protected by dozens of warships.



In 2367, the Vor'cha-class IKS Bortas served as Gowron's flagship during the Klingon Civil War. By 2371, the Klingons had introduced another new class of ship, the Negh'Var warship. This was similar to the Vor'cha class in appearance, but was even larger and more powerful, and as such, it took over as the flagship class of the Klingon Imperial Fleet.

Despite the introduction of the *Negh'Var* class, the production of *Vor'cha*-class ships was stepped up and they became a strong presence during the Klingon-Cardassian War of 2372-2373 and the subsequent attack on *Deep Space 9* that precipitated a brief Federation-Klingon War.

The *Vor'cha* class also played a vital part in the Dominion War, seeing action in most of the major battles of the conflict, including the final victorious showdown during the Battle of Cardassia.

DATA FEED

Gowron, who became Chancellor of the Klingon High Council, used the Vor'cha-class IKS Bortas as his flagship during the Klingon Civil War of 2367-2368. Worf briefly served as weapons officer aboard the Bortas during the early part of that conflict. The Bortas came under surprise attack from ships loyal to the House of Duras. but it survived thanks to the assistance of the IKS Hegh'ta commanded by Worf's brother Kurn.





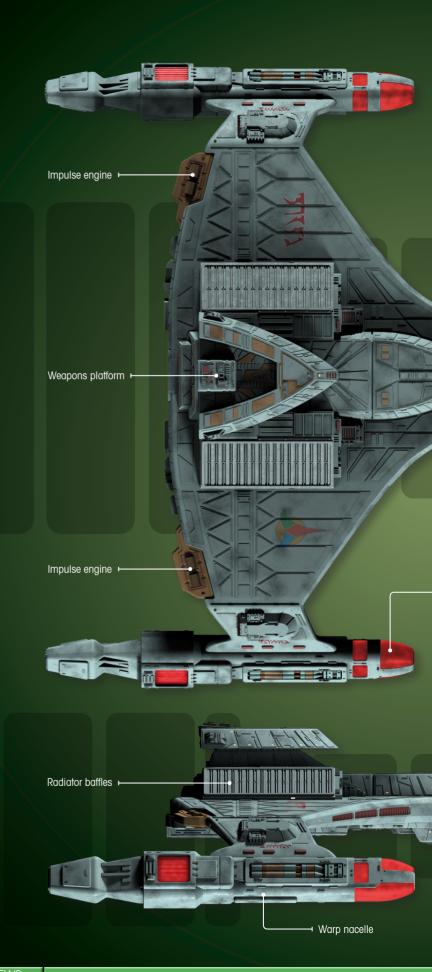
SHIP OF WAR

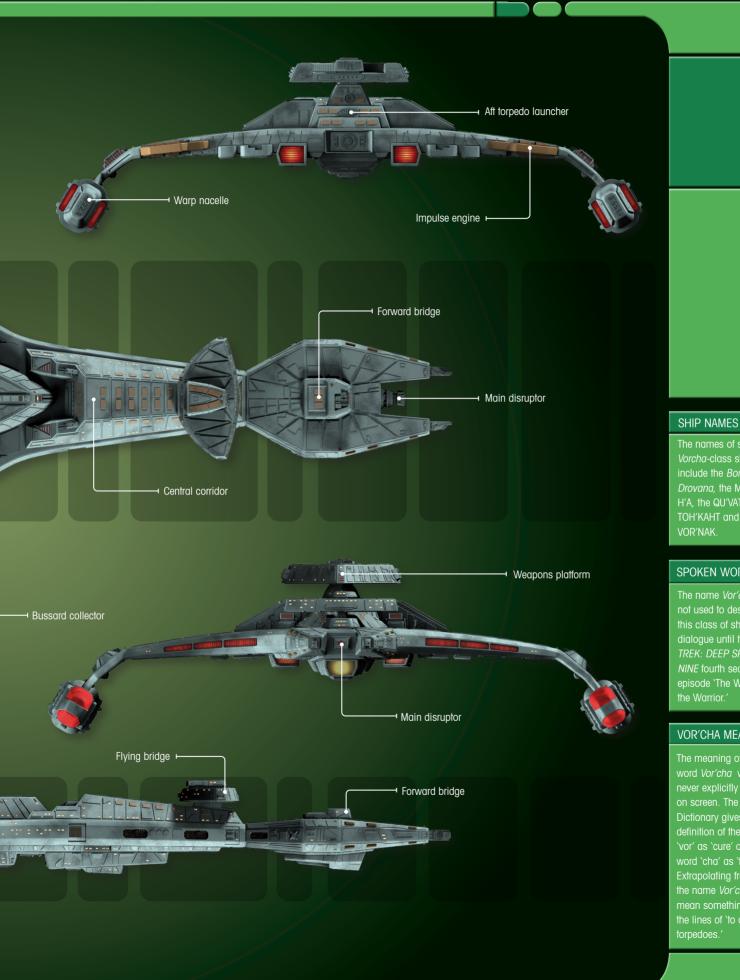
The Vor'cha-class attack cruiser was the most advanced type of ship in the Klingon fleet during the 2360s. As befitting its status, it was often used to transport Klingon dignitaries, but it was principally designed for combat. It was highly maneuverable for a large ship and equipped with a vast array of weaponry, including torpedo launchers and disruptor cannons. Its main weapon was a disruptor cannon in the 'nose' of the ship that was powerful enough to destroy a heavily fortified subterranean base. Vor'cha-class ships were involved in numerous conflicts in the latter half of the 24th century, most notably helping the Federation Alliance that defeated the Dominion.



DATA FEED

The *Vor'cha* class's secondary hull was composed of duranium alloy. This extremely strong metallic substance was used in the hull construction of starships from numerous races, including humans, Cardassians, Ferengi and Andorians.





Vorcha-class ships H'A, the QU'VAT, the

SPOKEN WORD

not used to describe TREK: DEEP SPACE the Warrior.

VOR'CHA MEANING

The meaning of the on screen. The Klingon Dictionary gives the definition of the word 'vor' as 'cure' and the Extrapolating from this, mean something along ▼ Little was known of Qo'noS, the Klingon homeworld, until the third season of *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*.



▲ The appearance of the Klingons when they first appeared in STAR TREK was based on Genghis Khan.

riginally, there weren't going to be any Klingons on STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION as Gene Roddenberry wanted to find new villains. Then Worf crept onto the bridge, and during the first two seasons the Klingons made occasional guest appearances. By the third season, Michael Piller was running the writing staff, and he asked Ronald D. Moore to have another look at the Klingon Empire. Moore had soon reinvented the Klingons, ensuring their place as one of TNG's most popular races.

"When I came on staff, Mike Piller wanted to do this show about Worf going back to the Klingon homeworld for the first time, " said Moore. "As part of the development process he said, 'Write up what you know about the Klingons and their culture.' So, I just went upstairs to my office and pounded out my take on the Klingons.

A NEW BEGINNING

REINVENTING THE

"I felt I was starting with a blank page. The original series hadn't really done too much about Klingon culture. They were villains, it was built around conquest, and there were certain attributes you could identify, but there wasn't that much to go from. In the second season of *TNG* they'd done the ► [Top picture] The Klingons' love of ritual was established in Worf's Second Rite of Ascension.

[Middle picture] Writer Ron Moore introduced many new aspects of Klingon society in 'Sins of the Father,' the first episode set on their homeworld.

[Bottom picture] The episode 'Reunion' began an epic Klingon saga after Wort's lover, K'Ehleyr, was murdered.

THE KLINGONS







show where Riker spends time on the Klingon ship ('A Matter of Honor'). That gave you an insight into how things worked over there, but I felt that there was a great deal that had yet to be explored."

The memo that Moore produced brought the Klingons into a new focus and became the foundation stone upon which their Empire was built. Although he didn't feel bound to the past, his version of the Klingons did have some televisual and literary roots.

"I took what I had seen in the original series as a jumping-off point," said Moore. "Then I was influenced by a *STAR TREK* tie-in novel by John Ford called `The Final Reflection,' which was all about the Klingons. There were a lot of things in it that I really liked. There was also a book called `Worlds of the Federation.' I hated the chapter on Klingons in that, so I went out of my way to do everything the opposite of what it said!"

NEW INSPIRATION

In the original series, the Klingons had clearly been *STAR TREK*'s version of the Russians. The parallel was so obvious that John Colicos, the first actor to play a major Klingon role, had even suggested basing the makeup for Kor on Genghis Khan, but by the 1990s things had moved on, and Moore felt the metaphor had become outdated.

"I stopped thinking of the Klingons as the Cold War adversary," said Moore. "It worked in the original show because it was current, but the place where the Russians were when I was doing the Klingon shows just wasn't as relevant any more. The Berlin Wall had fallen, and it was all about the collapse of this empire. I didn't want to take the Klingons down that road, because it would have essentially defanged them and I liked keeping them more dangerous. Their ups and downs were just part of this larger epic tale that had gone on for a few thousand years. I wanted the Klingons to be this long-running Empire with a long, glorious history, and whoever is up and whoever is down is just one more chapter."

Since Moore wasn't using the Russians as a model, he picked up on some other cultural references. As a result, his Klingons combined two very different cultures from Earth's past.

"I remember talking about them being a cross between medieval Samurai and Vikings," said Moore. "They had these real intricate codes of



▲ The power struggle between Duras's family and Gowron showed how treacherous and complex Klingon politics could be. honor and poetry, like the Samurai. They were also like Vikings: they were big, brawling, larger than life, they liked to drink and sing big songs like the Vikings, or at least our conception of the Vikings. That was where I began with the culture.

HONORABLE RACE

"The irony was that I wrote them more like the Romulans had been in the original series – they were very honorable people and they had these real codes of ethics; they were a warrior caste, and it was a different kind of society."



One thing that distinguished the Klingons from the Romulans and from our Starfleet crew was their love of ritual. This was something that had been firmly established on *TNG* in episodes such as 'The Icarus Factor,' which featured the celebration of Worf's ascension ritual.

"It just seemed like that was part of their culture," said Moore. "You saw more of it in 'Sins of the Father'; by the time we rolled around to 'Reunion,' the Klingons were a society that had a lot of ritualistic elements. That was just something else to keep embroidering on and keep using."

Until now, we hadn't really seen the Klingons on their own territory, and we had absolutely no experience of their politics. 'Sins of the Father' would change all that. For the first time, we were going to the Klingon homeworld and the complex machinations of Klingon politics soon became an essential part of *STAR TREK*.

ADDING DETAIL

The process of elaborating on Klingon politics began in Moore's second Klingon script, 'Reunion.' By now it was clear that Worf was becoming embroiled in an epic tale. In this single episode, Chancellor K'mpec dies, and Duras is exposed as a traitor and kills K'Ehleyr, only to be killed by Worf in revenge. This leaves Gowron as the sole candidate to rule the Empire. As Moore said, these grand themes played to his strengths as a writer and put the Klingons on an epic stage.

"I had a pull toward writing epic sagas out of my love of history and politics," said Moore. "The Klingons seemed to lend themselves so easily to it that it was a good fit. I could write in these

Duras was more concerned with power than honor and his actions ultimately plunged the Klingon Empire into civil war. Shakespearean terms of the rise and fall of empires on a very large canvas. Shakespeare's history plays are very, very much Klingon tales."

MORAL AMBIGUITY

And Moore wanted to be sure that, just as in Shakespeare, the moral status of powerful men was open to question. In particular, we could see that the new chancellor, Gowron, was hardly the ideal Klingon.

"Gowron had risen to power by being a manipulative, political character," said Moore. "The whole Klingon epic at that point was just soaked in intrigue and conspiracy and cross and double-cross. The Duras sisters were even more duplicitous than he was. I wanted him not to be the pure example of the good Klingon; he had to be not so great either. It made it more interesting if it wasn't auite so clear whose side was right."

All those machinations eventually led to the Klingon civil war, which was featured in the two-part episode, `Redemption.'

NEW PERSPECTIVES

The next major Klingon episode, 'Birthright,' was also a two-part story. For once, Moore didn't write the story; instead Brannon Braga scripted the first part, with René Echevarria writing the concluding installment. Far from feeling proprietorial, Moore was glad to find himself on the sidelines.

"That was good, because it let somebody else bring something to the party. It gave a chance to René and everybody else to kind of embroider on the Empire and to bring new things into it. I think that the singing in 'Birthright' is something I wouldn't have thought of. There was a later episode on *NEXT GENERATION*; they're on that planet and they are re-enacting a sort of opera (the Kot'baval Festival in `Firstborn'). It was a really interesting cultural element that just never would have occurred to me."

LESSONS IN MYTHOLOGY

Moore did write one more Klingon episode for *TNG*: 'Rightful Heir.' In this episode Kahless, the greatest of all Klingons, returns from the afterlife to reclaim his position as the head of the Empire.

"I really liked taking a crack at that," said Moore, "because it was religious. That was an interesting concept – if somebody found a lock of Jesus's hair and cloned him, what would people think? Is it the second coming? I thought it was fascinating."

Moore also used Kahless to make the Klingons seem a little more sensible. In a central scene, Kahless tells the story of a man who died fighting the wind. The point was that even Klingons knew there was a line that should not be crossed.

"The danger was that the audience would start to think of the Klingons as just crazy berserkers," said Moore. "There has to be a limit to how suicidal they are, or the entire race would just self-implode. I made a conscious choice to say, 'Look, there is a point where only a fool stands against the wind.' Yes, the Klingons love battle; yes, to die in glorious battle is this great thing. But they are also not fools and they're not willing to throw their lives away willy-nilly. Life does mean something to them and it is better to live than to die, most of the time. I wanted to pull them back a little bit, and I wanted it to come from Kahless."





◄ [Far left picture] The Kot'baval Festival seen in the episode 'Firstborn' explained how important Kahless was to Klingon society and added to their rich cultural history. [Near left picture] The legend of Kahless was explored further in 'Rightful Heir', and gave a greater understanding of Klingon beliefs



DESIGNING THE III III VORCHACLASS

hen the Klingons first appeared on STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION they were still using the two ships that were designed for the movies – Nilo Rodis' Bird-of-Prey and the K't'inga class, an updated version of Matt Jefferies' original Klingon D7 battle cruiser.

The producers and the art department occasionally discussed giving the Klingons a new, 24th-century ship, but for one reason or another this didn't happen until the season four episode `Reunion.' The task of designing this new ship fell to *TNG*'s senior illustrator Rick Sternbach. Sternbach had been designing ships since *TNG*'s first season, but most of them had been single-use vessels that were never seen again. It was obvious this Klingon cruiser would be used regularly, and he was excited by the idea of designing a major ship.

"The Vor'cha class was my first main ship that would be seen more than one time," said Sternbach. "With ships of the week I didn't use the same brain cells to produce the shapes, though they all need to turn out visually interesting and, technologically at least, somewhat plausible. They are fun, but the Klingon attack cruiser was truly a design challenge that required a synthesis of much of what we knew about Klingon spacecraft.

KLINGON FLAGSHIP

"As I recall from the production meetings on 'Reunion,' the description called for a new Klingon 'attack cruiser,' which was to be similar to the original battle cruiser, and would serve as the flagship for Chancellor K'mpec. This implied that the attack cruiser was likely to be the largest ship in the Imperial Klingon Forces, apart from cargo carriers or troop transports, as well as the most advanced." Although this was a new ship, Sternbach knew it had to be obvious that it was a Klingon vessel. He also wanted to suggest that it was the `modern' version of the original battle cruiser, establishing a link between *TNG* and the original *STAR TREK*.

"We wanted a visually recognizable ship with a known lineage," said Sternbach. "In most cases I needed to include something familiar, even if it's only the hull paint scheme or a few details in similar locations as on previous ships. If we go really far out then it might take a few pages of dialogue to explain what we've done. In this case the intent was to echo Matt Jefferies' original (*D7*) design right from the beginning; we wanted to give some sense of continuity in the evolution of Klingon warp vessels.

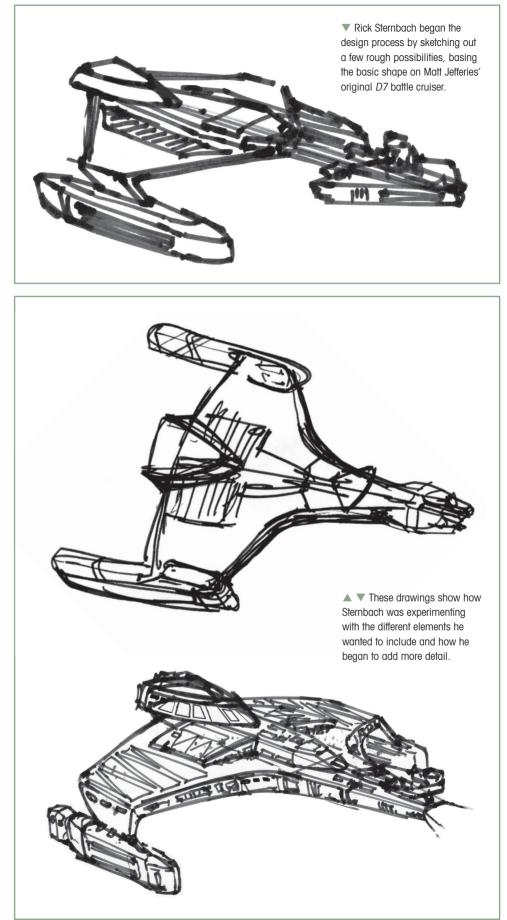
FAMILIAR SHAPES

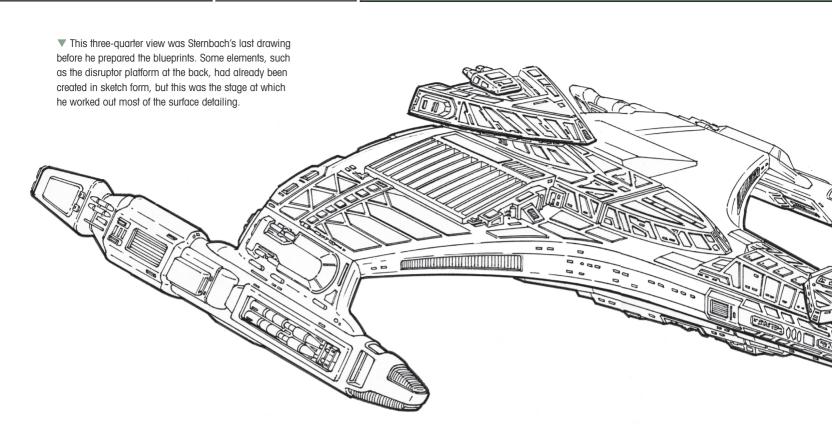
"The basic shapes were the head, long neck, wide aft body, and canted nacelles. I worked up a few variations, but tried to stay within the original proportions. It isn't hard to see that this is a Klingon design, given our art department penchant for keeping the shapes and color schemes of different cultures distinct."

Despite the obvious continuity between the two designs, Sternbach wanted to make sure that the new vessel looked more advanced than its predecessor. It also had to look at home next to the contemporary Klingon ships.

"Nilo Rodis' *Bird-of-Prey* design figured into the mix, with the large slotted radiator blocks," said Sternbach. "The upgrades of the battle cruiser from *STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE* and *STAR TREK VI: THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY* also contributed, with features such as the body panel surface break-up, impulse nozzles, photon torpedo launchers, and the like."

There were also practical reasons for updating the design ethic. In the 1960s,





STAR TREK's models tended to be smooth. This was partially because Matt Jefferies reasoned that starship designers wouldn't put elements that needed servicing on the outside of their vessels, but also because it made it easier to build the models.

DESIGNING THE SHIP

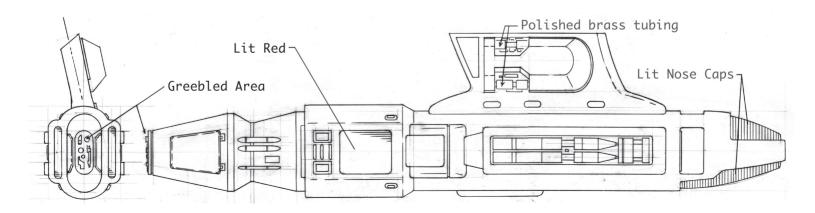
"The surface detailing is there because smooth miniatures have been notoriously difficult to light convincingly," said Sternbach. "The addition of raised detail helps a lot. Surface textures and coloring also add levels of detail that are more interesting to look at and help to sell the idea of large scale." The surface detail was directly linked to the earlier movie-era Klingon ships, but Sternbach also made a significant departure from the established Klingon design, which he built in to suggest the improved relations between the Klingons and the Federation.

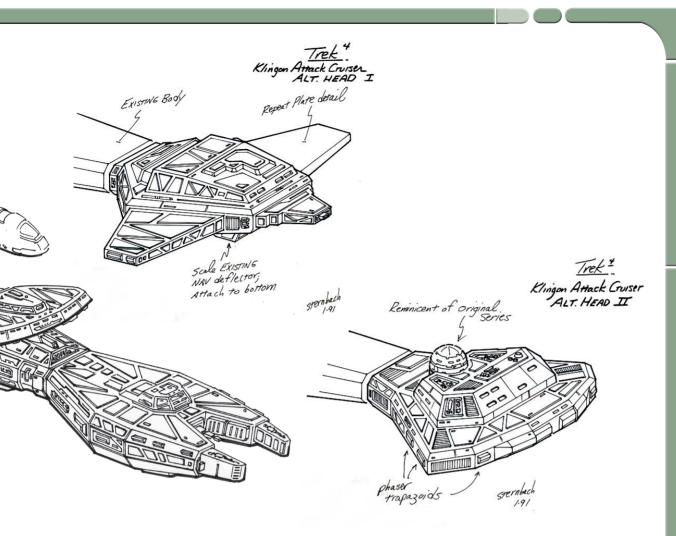
STARFLEET INFLUENCE

"The color scheme was purposely not purely Klingon," explained Sternbach. "I wanted to subtly suggest that because of the uneasy alliance between the Klingon Empire and the Federation, there were some transfers of technology that had eased the attack cruiser toward a more Starfleet look."

Sternbach often worked out a lot of information about the ships he designed, and the *Vor'cha* was no exception. Several of the components, such as the impulse engines and transporter emitters, were familiar, but he said that the *Vor'cha* had a few capabilities that were never revealed on screen.

"Like most *STAR TREK* ships, the attack cruiser had all the right parts, and those are all fairly recognizable," said Sternbach. "The exact functions of





✓ Sternbach designed the forward weapons module of the Vor'cha class to be ejectable in cases of emergency, but this capability was never seen on screen. These illustrations show design alternatives of the weapons module

some of the hardware chunks and piping were left to the imagination, I suppose, and could be determined later if the need arose. The repeating plate details were meant to convey a feeling of heavy armor plate, and while the operational specs of armor in the 24th century were vastly different from those for today's Centurion tank, the feeling was the same.

EJECTABLE BRIDGE

"The forward elevated section was a flying bridge; presumably it was ejectable in a crisis, like the bridges of the *Enterprise*-D and the *U.S.S. Voyager*. The aft raised wedge was designed as a large disruptor platform, though I think it could also have served as a small scout vessel."

One of the most obvious departures from the original *D7* battle cruiser was the forked unit at the front of the vessel. Sternbach added this because he wanted to give the Klingons a new and dangerous weapon.

"The forked front end was derived from some terrific energy weapons prevalent in Japanese anime productions like 'Macross,'" said Sternbach. "The Klingons already had disruptors and torpedoes, and I felt that this new main vessel should have at least one special bit of armament.

"The side units were designed to guide, like a rifle barrel, an enormous volume of energetic plasma emitted from the central cannon. The entire head end was, of course, an ejectable weapons pod that could conceivably be swapped out with other pods for specific missions. I liked to tell folks that if the pod had to be ejected in battle, the disruptor crew became instant heroes of the Klingon Empire and went straight to Sto-Vo-Kor."

to prepare blueprints for the modelmaker. This drawing of a *Vor'cha*class warp nacelle indicated the kind of materials that should be used and which areas had to light up. The model was built by Greg Jein at his workshop in Santa Monica.

The final stage was

ON SCREEN



TRIVIA

A painting (pictured below) of a Vor'cha-GENERATION episode 'Parallels.' In one painting Data had made of the Battle of HarOs and given to Worf for his birthday. represented the famous Klingon battle and depicted the Battle of HarOs.



The Klingon attack on *Deep Space 9* in the DEEP SPACE NINE episode `The Way of the Warrior' featured 34 Birds-of-Prey, six *Vor'cha*-class ships, 11 *K't'inga*-class ships

The battle sequence between the Klingon and Starfleet forces in 'The Way of the Warrior' was filmed using shop-bought model kits of the ships and even Bird-of-Prey Christmas ornaments. When one of the ships needed to be shown being blown up, it was filled with explosives and party glitter.

FIRST APPEARANCE: (`REUNION' (TNG)

TV APPEARANCES:

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

DESIGNED BY:

Rick Sternbach **KEY APPEARANCES**

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION 'REUNION'

A Klingon Vor'cha-class attack cruiser suddenly decloaks right next to the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-D. It is Chancellor K'mpec's flagship and he has urgent news to discuss with Captain Picard. K'mpec reveals that the Klingon Empire is on the brink of civil war as he is slowly being poisoned. He wants Picard to act as Arbiter of Succession and mediate on the power struggle after he is gone. He also asks Picard to find out which one of the two claimants has been poisoning him and prevent them from becoming the next Klingon leader.

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE 'APOCALYPSE RISING'

The war between the Federation and the Klingons is intensifying and Starfleet knows it must be stopped before both sides are irrevocably weakened. Captain Sisko, O'Brien, Worf and Odo are ordered to infiltrate the new Klingon military headquarters on Ty'Gokor and expose the Changeling who they suspect is impersonating the leader of the Klingon Empire. The problem is that Ty'Gokor is heavily fortified and protected by numerous Vor'chaclass ships. Approaching the Klingon chancellor seems an impossible task.

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- How John Eaves designed a sleek new Enterprise
- Filming the U.S.S. Enterprise NCC-1701-E for the big screen



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