

BattleGrid -- War in a Window

by Bob Dolan

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BattleGrid is a game of strategy between two players to locate ships placed on a grid by the opposing player. It is very similar to a classic board game with a similar name. Among the many differences in this version is the fact that the computer can play one or both sides of the contest. In addition, there are no playing pieces to lose!

The capabilities of **Microsoft Windows** are fully exploited with the intention of providing an efficient player's interface.

The basic premise of the game is twofold. First, a player must place five ships of different sizes on a 10 by 10 grid with hopes that an opponent will have difficulty locating all of them. Secondly, the player must attempt to locate all ships placed by their opponent. Scoring is determined by the number of shots taken during the game. Basically, if you are familiar with the classic game, then you already know how to play.

Installation

There are no special requirements for installing BattleGrid. If you already know how to install a **Windows** application, then place the executable file wherever you like. Otherwise, copy the program file into your **Windows** directory and run **Windows**. Follow these steps:

1. In the **Program Manager**, open your **Games** icon (if it is not already open).
2. Select the **File** menu in the menu bar of the **Program Manager** and make the New... selection
3. When the dialog box opens, press the **OK** button.
4. In the file selector, scroll down to the bottom of the list. Double click on **BATLGRID.EXE**, which will be one of the first files shown.
5. In the next dialog that appears, press **Change Icon**. If the icon shown is not acceptable, press the **View Next** button until a more appropriate icon is displayed. There are three icons total. When you are ready, press **OK** and **OK** again.

The **BattleGrid** icon should now appear in your **Games** group. The program can be run by double clicking on the new icon.

Playing BattleGrid

BattleGrid begins with a blank window. Open the **File** menu and select **Player Name**. A dialog will appear. Type in your name or handle in the editbox below **Left Player**. This will be the name which is appended to any scores you place in the best score list. If you will be regularly playing against a particular person, enter their name in the editbox below **Right Player**. To make these changes permanent, press the OK button. Press the Cancel button to leave the names as they were.

BattleGrid can be played in three ways. To choose the game you wish to play, select the **Numer Of Players** item in the **Options** menu. The following choices will appear in a sub-menu:

- Human vs. Human**: the conventional two player game. The player names are determined by the entries in the Player Name dialog.

- Human vs. Computer**: the conventional one player game. When this option is selected, a dialog will appear prompting for you to select the opponent you wish to play against. Hal and Eliza are very competent players and use efficient but different strategies in their approach. The Bob player is rather crude and methodical. Play against Bob if you are on a losing streak.

- Computer vs. Computer**: this mode is an interesting simulation of gameplay. The players will always be Hal and Eliza (who wants to see Bob get beat up anyway!). If you press the BattleGrid window minimize button (in the upper right corner), the window will be reduced to an icon. The game will continue, and the score will be updated on the icon.

There are three ways of varying the way the game will play. These can be controlled by choosing menu items in the Options menu. They are:

- Fast Mode**: when checked, the computer player(s) will play at high speed. You can barely see the turns being taken, but it is helpful for impatient players and for the simulation mode. If Fast Mode is checked during simulation mode, a new game will start automatically when one player wins. Otherwise, you must press the OK button in a dialog to proceed.

-Reveal Mode: also known as cheat mode. Normally when a hit is made on an opponents ship, it is shown as a colorful circle. However, if Reveal Mode is active, the actual part of the ship which was struck is shown. This makes it quite easy to decide where the next shot should be taken. This mode cannot be used to handicap one player, since it affects both grids. The computer players do not use this information in any way, so it can give you an advantage when playing the computer.

-Shots Per Round: selecting this menu item, will present a dialog box prompting the user to select the number of shots each player will take during their turn. The choices range from one to five shots. The classic game was based on alternating single shots, however this could get tedious when only one mouse must be shared.

Probably the best way to describe how to play **BattleGrid** is to provide a walk-thru of a game of you against the computer.

Open the **Options** menu and select **Number of Players**. A submenu will open. Choose **Human vs. Comp**. Now a dialog will open, prompting for your opponent. Select Bob and press OK.

Open the **File** menu and select **New Game**. Under the left grid, a message box will appear. It will indicate "Set the Battleship". Move your mouse to any square in the grid and press the mouse button. The marker that appears shows the front location of the Battleship. The directions it can be placed in are indicated by the arrow buttons surrounding the marker. Press one of these arrow buttons to place the ship. This process continues for all of the ships in your fleet in the following order:

```
Battleship -- 5 blocks long
Carrier ----- 4 blocks long
Frigate ----- 4 blocks long
Destroyer --- 3 blocks long
Submarine --- 2 blocks long
```

The message box below the left grid should now indicate: "Left Shots Taken: 0". This is your clue that the war has begun. Begin taking shots on the left grid. When the mouse cursor becomes an hourglass, the computer will take it's shots at your fleet on the right grid. Hits are indicated by the hit marker and misses are shown with waves.

When all the hits on a particular ship are made, the ship sinks, and is displayed in full. When all five ships are displayed, a dialog will appear showing the winner's name and the number of shots taken. If the shot count is less than any of those in the **Best Scores** list it will be added to it. You can see this list by selecting **Best Scores** in the menubar.

Once the game ends, the **Show Boats** item in the **File** menu is enabled. If you select this, all undiscovered boats are shown.

Strategy

There are as many strategies to playing **BattleGrid** as there are players. Every one of those beta-testing **BattleGrid** developed their own methods to reaching the best score possible. Each was as correct as the next. There are however several undisputable techniques to get you started:

Locating Ships

Before you can sink a ship, you must find one in that vast ocean. On an empty grid, space random shots equally about. Once the grid is filled with various hits and misses, you can make judgements about where the remaining ships might be hiding. In other words, don't click in a two block opening when the only ship you need to win is a Carrier (four blocks).

Sinking Ships

Once you have a hit, you must determine direction by making selections around the hit. These should be North, South, East, and West since ships cannot reside on diagonals. When one of these directions hits, you have your boat. Continue in this direction until you miss, then reverse direction to the beyond the first hit. If you have gone as far as you can in both directions and still haven't sunk a ship, you're in luck! It means that your shots have hit the middle of several other ships. This situation comes as a result of poor ship placement by your opponent. Consider this when placing your own ships. The computer players may make this mistake in their own placements.

Other Notes

During any game, the **New Game** menu item is not available. To start a new game, you must terminate the current game by selecting **End Game** from the **File** menu.

As games are played, a running total is kept in the title bar of the window. The scores can be reset to zero by selecting the **Reset Score** item in the **Option** menu.

If you have changed some of the game controls or a new best score has made it to the top ten list, you will be prompted to save this information into the **BATLGRID.INI** file when you exit BattleGrid. Select **Yes** to make the changes permanent and exit, or **No** to ignore the changes and just exit. If you do not wish to exit at this time press **Cancel**.

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Registration

BattleGrid is distributed as shareware. This means that if you regularly use the product and benefit from it, you should register with the author (address below). The software you now have is not crippled in any way. This indicates a basic trust of the shareware concept by myself and other shareware authors who provide useful products with the hope of some type of reward for their efforts. Frequent users of **BattleGrid** who do not register, risk Karma damage (this may not be serious). Registration is \$10.

If you are a shareware author, you can register by mailing to me a registered version of your product.

Please fill out the registration form at the end of this document so I have a better idea of where **BattleGrid** has gone and who is registering it.

My address:

**Bob Dolan
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Rochester, New York 14616**

You may reach me on **GEnie** at the following EMail address: **DOLAN**

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Update History

Version 1.00 -- October 31, 1991

First release.

Version 1.01 -- January 15, 1992

Shots per round dialog did not retain the user selected value. This has been fixed.

Registration Form

Please register me as a satisfied user
of BattleGrid (ver 1.01):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (optional): _____

GEnie mail address (if appl): _____

Where did you get BattleGrid? _____

Comments (please be honest and direct): _____

