

Welcome to the MechCommander(tm) Demo

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MechCommander is a real-time game of tactical combat and persistent resource management set in the BattleTech(r) Universe. Players assume the role of a MechCommander in charge of a unit of MechWarriors(r). The goal is to clear the way for an invasion that will retake the planet Port Arthur from the technologically superior Smoke Jaguar Clan. The player commands up to 12 MechWarriors and fights against dozens of enemy 'Mechs(r), Elementals, armored vehicles and fortified emplacements. The condition of both 'Mechs and MechWarriors carries forward from mission to mission. Players can buy new 'Mechs, components and pilots or use salvage from the battlefield to gain superior enemy 'Mechs and weapons. The game will be fully multiplayer network capable.

IMPORTANT INSTALLATION INFORMATION ABOUT DIRECTX

Previous installations of DirectX 5.0 may not be compatible with MechCommander. To insure that you have the latest version for your system, install DirectX from the MechCommander CD-ROM or download the latest version of DirectX from Microsoft's Web site at <http://www.microsoft.com/msdownload/directx/dxf/enduser5.0/default.htm>. If you have any problems running MechCommander, rerun SETUP.EXE and be sure to click on "Yes" when prompted to install DirectX 5.0. If you already have the latest version, running SETUP.EXE will make no changes to your system. If you encounter problems running any other applications after installing DirectX, you can restore your previous drivers and settings by running DirectX setup and clicking on "Restore... Drivers."

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

IBM PC 133MHz Pentium compatible or better
Windows 95 or Windows 98
DirectX version 5.0
16MB RAM
4x-speed CD-ROM drive
Hard drive (110MB free)
Super VGA graphics for 640 x 480 x 256 colors
Mouse
Keyboard

RECOMMENDED SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

IBM PC 166MHz Pentium compatible or faster
Windows 95 or Windows 98
DirectX version 5.0
32MB RAM
8x-speed CD-ROM drive
Hard drive (110MB free)
Super VGA graphics for 640 x 480 x 256 colors
Mouse
Keyboard

You must have 48MB of free space on your hard drive for the swap file to play the MechCommander demo. This swap space must be available on the hard drive where your operating system is installed, which is usually drive C.

UNINSTALLING THE DEMO

It is unclear why you would ever want to do this, but to uninstall the MechCommander demo, just delete the directory that you installed the program to. If C: is the letter of the hard drive you installed to, the default directory is C:\Program Files\FasaInteractive\MechCmdrDemo. Simply delete the FasaInteractive directory or folder by right-clicking on it with your mouse and selecting Delete. When prompted with "Do you wish to delete..." click on the "Yes to all" button.

PREPARING FOR A MISSION

After launching the game and selecting "Play Demo," review the Mission Briefing on the Briefing/Deployment Screen. Check out each Mech in your roster by clicking on it in the Ready Area in the bottom left of the screen. Then, go to Purchasing by clicking the "Purchasing" button in the upper left-hand corner of the screen.

In both Purchasing and the MechBay, the equipment you own is located on the left side of the screen in your Current Inventory. Equipment available from Battalion Inventory is located on the right side of the screen. Click the appropriate tab (located next to your Current Inventory) to view your supplies. Note that these tabs change the display in both the Current Inventory and Battalion Inventory areas to show either BattleMechs, MechWarriors, Components or Vehicles.

To make a purchase, drag the BattleMechs/MechWarriors/Components/Vehicles you choose from Battalion Inventory on the right side of the screen into your Current Inventory on the left side of the screen. Once you have completed your purchases, go to the MechBay by clicking the MechBay button in the upper left-hand corner of the screen.

In the Mech Bay, you can repair your Mechs' damaged armor, internal structure and engine by clicking on the "Repair All" button. You can also replace all of its damaged weapon and sensor gear by clicking on "Refit All." Additionally, you can selectively replace components by dragging them from the component list on the Mech and dropping them into your inventory to remove, or dragging from your inventory and dropping in the component slot of the Mech in question. You can also swap around MechWarriors in the same manner. Player-controlled vehicles do not appear in this demo.

When you are ready to deploy into a mission, return to the Briefing/Deployment screen by clicking the Briefing/Deployment button in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. Drag your units into the force group drop zones and click the Start Mission button. Note that Mechs without MechWarriors do not appear in the Ready Area of the Briefing/Deployment screen.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

Select a unit	left-mouse click or drag box
Select a group of units	drag box or select appropriate function key
Select all units on screen	[e]
Deselect a unit	[Shift] + left-mouse click
Deselect all units	right-mouse click
Move	left-mouse click on the destination
Run	[Spacebar] + left-mouse click
Jump	[j] + left-mouse click (jump-capable Mechs only; limited distance)

Stop/Hold Fire/Cancel Artillery	[Backspace]
Attack, from current location	[c] + left-mouse click
Attack, long-range	[l] + left-mouse click
Attack, medium-range	[m] + left-mouse click
Attack, short-range	[s] + left-mouse click
Attack head	[8] + left-mouse click
Attack left torso	[7] + left-mouse click
Attack right torso	[9] + left-mouse click
Attack left arm	[4] + left-mouse click
Attack center torso	[5] + left-mouse click
Attack right arm	[6] + left-mouse click
Attack legs	[1,3] + left-mouse click
Pause	[Esc]
Guard	[g] + left-mouse click
Lay mines	[f] + left-mouse click (minelayer only; not available in this demo)
Power down	[Page Down]
Power up	[Page Up]
Eject	[Home]
Capture	Context-sensitive cursor
Repair	Context-sensitive cursor (not available in this demo)
Scroll battlefield view down	Mouse-down or [Down Arrow]
Scroll battlefield view left	Mouse-left or [Left Arrow]
Scroll battlefield view right	Mouse-right or [Right Arrow]
Scroll battlefield view up	Mouse-up or [Up Arrow]
Zoom battlefield view in	[+]
Zoom battlefield view out	[-]
Multifunctional Display	
Open/Close with previous display active	[Alt]
Open/Close with Briefing active	[Alt] + [b]
Open/Close with Data active	[Alt] + [d]
Open/Close with Map active	[Alt] + [m]
Open/Close with Salvage active	[Alt] + [s]
Scroll tactical map down	[Ctrl] + [Down Arrow]
Scroll tactical map left	[Ctrl] + [Left Arrow]
Scroll tactical map right	[Ctrl] + [Right Arrow]
Scroll tactical map up	[Ctrl] +- [Up Arrow]
Zoom tactical map in	[Ctrl] + [+]
Zoom tactical map out	[Ctrl] + [-]

FIRE SUPPORT

Fire Support is located on the Multifunctional Display (MFD), located in the upper-left hand corner of the Battlefield Display. To call in an artillery strike, click on the Small or Large Artillery Icon at the top of the MFD. The cursor will change to a Fire Support cursor. Click the Fire Support cursor on the desired impact point in the Battlefield View. Artillery strikes can only be called into revealed terrain, either on the Tactical Map or the Battlefield View. A sensor probe or camera drone can be dropped into unrevealed terrain.

A small artillery strike arrives quickly, in about seven seconds, and delivers a reasonable amount of damage to a limited area. It is an ideal support weapon for area control since its short in-flight time makes it easier to time a hit against a moving target.

A large artillery strike takes about twice as long to arrive as a small strike and delivers significant damage to a larger area. It is difficult to time a hit against a moving target, but it is ideal for destroying weapon emplacements, buildings, and other structures.

GROUP ORDERS

Selecting a Group, either by clicking on the Unit Tab at the bottom of the screen or by hitting the associated function key, issues any subsequent orders to the entire group. The unit then responds as a group, taking its cues from the Pointman of the group, who is the leftmost of the Unit Icons for that group. When moving, the group roughly forms up behind him and follows him into battle.

Note that if a Full Power Movement Order is given to the group, the members of the group will get to the destination at the best speed possible, which could mean they arrive at the destination before the Pointman does. If a Half Power Movement Order is given, any units ahead of the Pointman will wait for the point to take the lead.

UNIT ORGANIZATION AND REORGANIZATION

The Tactical Combat Interface supports up to three Force Groups, each containing up to four combat units up to a total of 12 units.

To change which unit is the current Pointman of that group first select the group. Then, hold down the [Ctrl] key while pressing the Function Key for that Group. The "Point" Cursor appears. Click the "Point" Cursor on the unit that is to be the new Pointman. The Group display then reorganizes to place the new Pointman in the leftmost position.

To change which units are in a group or to create an entirely new group, first select all the units that are to be in the Group. Then, hold down the [Ctrl] key while pressing the function key (F1-F4) for that Group. The "Point" Cursor appears. Click the "Point" Cursor on the unit that is to be the new Pointman. The Group display then reorganizes to include the selected units with the designated Pointman in the left most position.

In addition to the three Force Groups, the interface supports up to 12 independent units that are not assigned to any Force Group and cannot receive a Group Order. To make a unit that is part of a Group independent, first select the unit. Then, hold down the [Ctrl] key while pressing the [F5] key. That unit is now independent. The Unit Icon display reorganizes to move that unit to the right of any Force Groups. An independent unit is not part of a Group and cannot be selected using a function key.

KNOWN PROBLEMS

Running any other applications concurrently with MechCommander may cause MechCommander to quit when minimized and switching between applications. For performance issues, we recommend that you quit all other applications before launching MechCommander.

Ejecting pilots lose one health unit. A pilot that ejects with only one health unit will appear in the MechWarrior bay with an empty status bar. Pilots with an empty status bar are dead. Beginning a mission with a dead pilot in a Mech will crash the game.

Pressing Scroll Lock will bring up a dialog box showing your system configuration and pause the game in a windowed mode. Press Continue to resume and Alt+Enter to return to full screen mode. If you are reporting a bug to the e-mail address below, save and attach your system configuration to the e-mail.

If you receive an "Reentrant Assert" error box, you do not have the latest version of DirectX 5.0 installed or there is a problem with your video driver. Press Ctrl+Alt+Delete and click on "End Task" to remove the error. Reinstall DirectX from the MechCommander directory or download it from Microsoft at the URL listed under IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT DIRECTX at the beginning of this document.

FINALLY

Thank you for your interest in the MechCommander demo. The full version of MechCommander will be in stores this summer. We appreciate your support and welcome your feedback. If you have any comments, write to us at demo@mechcommander.com.

For technical support, e-mail FASA Interactive at demo@mechcommander.com or MicroProse at support@microprose.com.

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