

Combat Tanks Help

Welcome to Combat Tanks, the first in a series of Windows battle games designed to merge the calculated tactfulness of strategy with the excitement of shoot-em-up action. Although strategy and a quick trigger finger are both important in mastering the game, neither are necessary to have fun.

Your role in Combat Tanks is that of a tank commander, controlling your tank against an entire enemy army in one player mode, and against another equally powerful tank, controlled by the other player, in two player mode. You can also team up with the other player as allies and fight the computer army.

Although this on-line help is important for learning the details of the game, you will be surprised at how easy it is to get started. If you're the type that doesn't like delving through help files (like us), we encourage you to go ahead and play a few games. However, you may want to read the Combat Basics section to learn how to control your tank. Remember, there is no substitute for experimentation. Have fun!

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Developer's Note



We at Red Herring would like to impress on you that although the content of this game is somewhat violent in nature, we do not support violence in any real form. Some might say that violence in any form is a bad thing. However, the violence portrayed in this game is fantasy, and fantasy must never be mistaken for reality. We feel that fantasy is a very important part of reality, and violence is a very real part of fantasy. We, as humans, need to learn to channel more of our negative inclinations, such as violence, through fantasy and leave real violence behind.

Credits



Game Concept:

Quixote, Gandalf

Software Development:

Gandalf, Quixote

Graphics:

Quixote

Sound:

Quixote, Gandalf

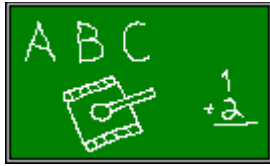
User's Guide/Online Help:

Quixote

Additional Contributions:

Mr. Howell	graphics help, advice, support and testing
House	pipedream ideas, advice, support and testing
Zombie	cool gameplay ideas, general sadistic input

Combat Basics



This section is a brief summary of how to play Combat Tanks. For more detailed information, please refer to the appropriate section.

The objective of Combat Tanks is quite simple; you are a tank commander and your job is to survive. If you are playing in one player mode, you are commanding the red tank. In two player mode, player one commands the red tank and player two commands the blue tank.

You may control your tank by way of the keyboard or a joystick. The keyboard has default key settings that may be customized and saved to suit your own tastes. These settings determine which keys control your tank's movement and weapons. There are six control keys for your tank: forward, backward, clockwise, counter-clockwise, select, and fire. To see the current configuration for these keys, select Options Keyboard from the Combat Tanks menu and a dialog box will open showing the current key settings. There are different key settings for each player. Combat Tanks automatically detects joysticks, so if you are using a joystick, you need not worry about the key settings. The primary joystick buttons are equivalent to the select and fire keys, respectively.

The four directional keys move the tank in the indicated direction. The select key determines which weapon is currently being used. You have three different weapons: bullets, mines, and guided missiles. Each weapon, as well as the quantity of each, is displayed in the Info Bar at the top of the Combat Tanks window, below the menu. The selected weapon appears inset in the Info Bar. The quantity of a particular weapon is represented by small strikes next to the weapon in the Info Bar. To fire the currently selected weapon, simply press the fire key. Guided missiles may be steered by using the same clockwise and counter-clockwise keys used for tank control.

Your tank's energy is represented by an energy gauge in the Info Bar. When your energy is completely depleted, your tank explodes and the game is over. Your score appears in the Info Bar and is a rough measure of how many enemies you have destroyed. Admittedly, scores do not serve much purpose in this game other than providing some competitiveness in trying to stay on the high score list, or Top Combatants, as we call it.

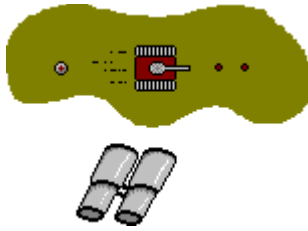
In a one player or Allied two player game, the current level is shown in the section of the Info Bar below the score. As you progress through the levels, new divisions of the enemy army will start attacking you and the old ones will get more aggressive and sometimes acquire new weapons. In a two player Flag Capture game, the section below the score in the Info bar shows the number of flags picked up. This section serves no purpose in a two player Versus game.

You can get extra weapons and heal yourself by picking up tokens that randomly appear. Each token has a picture on it representing what the token offers. In a two player Versus or Flag Capture game there are extra tokens that have the pictures of infantry reinforcements on them. When picked up, these tokens cause a reinforcement of the given type to be sent after the other player.

The terrain consists of walls, water, and mud. Walls completely block you and all other ground enemies and weapons. Water and mud impede your movement and that of all other ground enemies. Water slows movement by 50% and mud slows movement by 75%. Air enemies aren't affected by walls, water, or mud, except that their weapons can't travel through walls.

That's really all you need to know to get playing. Happy combating!

Overview



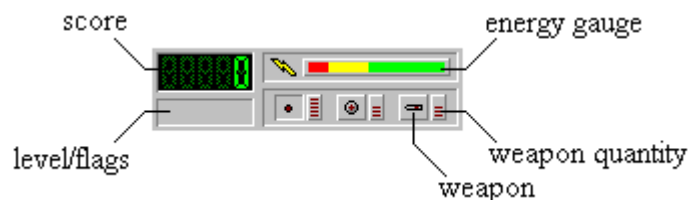
Objective

The goal of Combat Tanks is to survive. To survive, you must defend yourself against a multitude of enemies. The enemies vary depending on the number of players and the current level. Your survival depends on how well you master controlling your tank and planning attacks. Although you may choose to approach the game as merely a shoot-em-up, you will never really master it until you inject some amount of strategy, especially in the two player game. Whether you choose an all out blitz or a carefully planned defensive, your main objective is to outlast and outwit the enemy; be it the computer army or a human opponent.

The Display

The Combat Tanks window is divided into five regions: the caption bar, menu, Info Bar, Play Field, and Status Bar. The caption bar and menu are standard Windows components; for information about these components, please consult your Windows manuals. The other three regions are discussed in this section.

The Info Bar contains visual information regarding the status of the game. Each side of the bar shows the same information, specific to each player. A general diagram of the right side of the bar is shown below.



The important sections of the Info Bar, as labeled in the diagram, are as follows: score, energy gauge, weapon quantity, weapon, and level/flags. The score section shows the current score. The energy gauge shows the energy and is itself sectioned into colored segments. These colored segments give a better indication of how much energy is left. The weapon quantity section shows how many weapons of the adjacent type there are (maximum of 5). The weapon section shows the weapon itself and is inset for the selected weapon. The level/flags section shows the level in a one player game, and the number of flags picked up in a two player game.

The Play Field is the area between the Info and Status Bars, and is where the action of the game takes place. All of the graphical objects in the game are bounded by the Play Field, with the exception that computer enemies may sometimes exit off of the field.

The Status Bar is the section at the very bottom of the Combat Tanks window. The Status Bar displays important information, usually about menus and commands. When a menu item is selected, the Status Bar gives a brief description of the command. Aside from providing quick help, the Status Bar provides other context-sensitive information. Keep an eye on it!

Game Controls

The controls in Combat Tanks are relatively simple. There are four directional controls and two weapon controls. The directional controls move the tank in the prescribed direction: forward, backward, clockwise, and counter-clockwise. The weapon controls are used to select and fire weapons. All of these controls are accessed by either the keyboard or joysticks. The keyboard interface is determined by the key definitions in the Keyboard Options dialog box. For information about setting these keys, see

the Options section. Combat Tanks automatically detects joysticks. The stick movements on the joystick correspond to the directional controls, and the buttons on the joystick correspond to the weapon controls. If only one joystick is being used, it must be used by Player 1.

Game Objects

There are various objects in Combat Tanks that are of importance. They can be grouped into three different categories: enemies, weapons, and tokens. All of the objects corresponding to each category are described in this section.

Enemies

Enemies are objects controlled by the computer that have a single purpose: to destroy you! Different enemies come out at different levels. The different enemies and their strengths are shown below.



Bomber impossible to kill



Chopper tough



Small Tank tough



Soldier weak

Weapons

Your tank is equipped with 3 types of weapons: bullets, mines, and missiles. You have an unlimited amount of bullets, although no more than 5 may be fired at a time, and up to 5 mines and missiles. You are immune to your own mines and missiles, but not the computer infantry's, the other player's, or even your own reinforcements'. The missiles are guided and you control them by steering your tank. The weapons are shown below, along with their strengths.



Bullet light



Mine heavy



Missile medium

Tokens

Tokens allow you to replenish your supply of weapons, "heal" yourself, and call in reinforcements against the other player. The different tokens and what they offer are shown below.



Mine adds 1 mine to supply (5 maximum)



Missile adds 1 missile to supply (5 maximum)



Energy adds 10 units of energy to supply



Bomber sends a bomber after the other player



Chopper sends a chopper after the other player

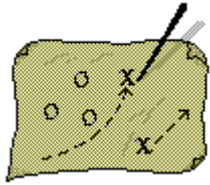


Small Tank sends 2 small tanks after the other player



Soldier sends 3 soldiers after the other player

Strategy



There are many different strategies and tricks we have discovered while testing and playing Combat Tanks. We've listed some of the more useful ones below. If you find anything interesting please write and tell us about it...

Hidden Mines : You are immune to your own mines, so in a two player game try to occasionally drop a mine in water or mud; the mine will sink and be unnoticeable to the other player.

Faster Bullets : You can only have 5 bullets active at a time. The speed of bullets are proportional to your tank speed, so firing while moving forward will allow you to fire faster since the bullets will terminate quicker.

Better Missile Control : Missiles are proportional to your tank speed, so firing a missile while moving backward will allow more control of the missile, since it is moving slower.

Aggression During Missile Attack When the other player fires a missile, immediately head for them and fire away as they concentrate on guiding their missile. It is very difficult to guide a missile and drive the tank defensively. Using this technique will keep the other player from cruising a missile around after you and it will teach them that they better have a really good shot before they fire a missile.

The Old Air Assault-Missile One-Two : Before picking up a bomber or chopper token, select missiles as your weapon. Then pick up the token and fire at the same time. The other player will be torn between dodging the air strike and dodging the missile and one or the other will get him, maybe both.

Recovering Missiles : If you miss the intended target with a missile and it didn't hit anything else, you can catch it if you steer it into your tank. The missile is then recovered back into your ammunition.

Moving Walls : You can move walls by getting a running start and ramming them. However, it does take off a little energy each time.

Soldier Paramedics : Watch out for pairs of soldiers rambling about as they sometimes have the capability to heal one another if wounded.

Options

Gameplay Options



The Gameplay Options determine the configuration of the game. These options can be saved by checking the Save box and selecting OK when finished. The different options are described below. Selecting Cancel at any time will exit the dialog box without keeping any changes.

of Players

Selects one or two players; in a one player game, all other Gameplay Options are overridden.

Game Type

Selects Versus Combat, Allied Combat, or Flag Capture two player game options; in a Versus Combat game the objective is to destroy the other player, in an Allied Combat game the objective is to work together against the computer army, and in a Flag Capture game the objective is to capture, or run over, 5 flags before the other player. It is important to note that in a Flag Capture game you can still be killed. As a matter of fact, each player starts off with $\frac{1}{4}$ energy, making it tougher to haphazardly go for flags.

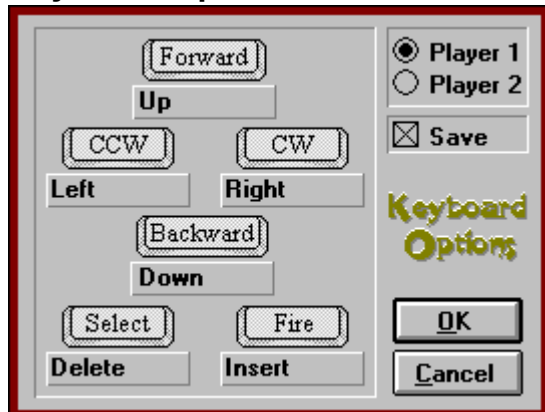
Terrain Type

Selects what terrain objects will be placed on the battlefield; any, all, or none of the terrain types may be selected. Each type has its own effect on the strategy of the game; walls block all low-altitude objects, water slows down all surface objects, and mud really slows down all surface objects.

Surface Type

Selects the surface type; the surface types do not directly affect the strategy of the game, but they do provide a nice change of pace. In one player and two player Allied games, the surface type changes based on level. In two player Versus and Flag Capture games, laptop users might get better results with a snow surface for higher contrast on LCD screens.

Keyboard Options



These options allow each key in the game to be redefined to any key on the keyboard. To change a key setting, simply click or tab to the control and press the desired key. The name of the key will appear

below the control. There are separate key definitions for each player; to change the player, click the desired Player radio button. These options can be saved by checking the Save box and selecting OK when finished. Selecting Cancel at any time will exit the dialog box without keeping any changes.

About Red Herring



Red Herring is a small software developer specializing in the Windows market. We are currently devoting all of our resources to the entertainment area of the Windows market. We are game players. We also happen to be programmers. Also being Windows users, we were amazed by the apparent lack of concern toward Windows games by developers. We like to think we've upped the requirements for Windows entertainment a little, and in the process created a fun game.

If you have any comments or ideas please write us. We want to have a very close relationship with the users of our products. We are biased in that we write games that we think are fun. Hopefully our idea of fun is shared by you! Have fun with Combat Tanks and keep your eyes peeled for the next installment in the Combat series. Thanks for your support...

Game Menu Commands

Game

The following commands are located in the Game menu. They can be accessed by either the mouse or the keyboard. To select an item with the mouse, click on the item. To select an item with the keyboard, hold down the ALT key while pressing the key specified by the underlined letter in the menu item name.

New

Starts a new game based on the currently selected Gameplay Options.

End

Ends the current game. Please note that ending a game prohibits the player from being added to the Top 5 Combatants, if applicable.

Top 5

Shows the Top 5 Combatants, along with their respective score and finishing level. The Top Combatants are automatically written to a file, so they are preserved. The Top Combatants only apply to one player games.

Exit

Closes Combat Tanks.

Options Menu Commands

Options

The following commands are located in the Options menu. They can be accessed by either the mouse or the keyboard. To select an item with the mouse, click on the item. To select an item with the keyboard, hold down the ALT key while pressing the key specified by the underlined letter in the menu item name.

Gameplay

Allows the Gameplay Options to be modified. These options are discussed in the Options section of this help file.

Keyboard

Allows the Keyboard Options to be modified. These options allow each key in the game to be redefined to any key on the keyboard. These options are discussed in the Options section.

Sound

Toggles sound on or off. Please note that sound requires Windows 3.1 and a Windows multimedia compatible sound card with driver installed.

Pause

Toggles pausing the current game. Please note that the game is automatically paused when it becomes inactive; that is, when another application is switched to or when Combat Tanks is minimized.

Help Menu Commands

Help

The following commands are located in the Help menu. They can be accessed by either the mouse or the keyboard. To select an item with the mouse, click on the item. To select an item with the keyboard, hold down the ALT key while pressing the key specified by the underlined letter in the menu item name.

Contents

Opens the main help utility for Combat Tanks.

How To Play

Opens the main help utility to the section on how to play Combat Tanks.

How To Use Help

Opens the Windows help utility to the section on how to use Windows help.

About

Gives information about Combat Tanks, including the version number and copyright information.

Info

Opens a help utility with information about Combat Tanks and Red Herring.

