

Important

Read this file for important information about the game and command line options.

This game cannot run under Windows(tm) due to that way in which Windows(tm) alters certain hardware timings. These make scrolling the screen smoothly impossible, so you must exit Windows and play the game from your normal DOS prompt. The same may be true of some other multi-tasking environments, but this has not been tested. If in doubt, run from real DOS, not DOS in a window.

Loading

The game can be run directly from the floppy disk, or a copy of it, although installing the game to hard disc will greatly decrease the in-game loading times.

Go to the directory the game is in and run the demo, substitute your chosen Directory in the example below.

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CD C:\GAMES\FIREDEMO <ENTER>
FIREXMAS <ENTER>
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Command line options can also be appended, more information follows.

Hardware Options

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After starting the game you will be presented with a series of option menus. In all cases press the number key corresponding to the option you require. If an option is not currently available to you it will be blacked out and you will be unable to select it.

Control Method

The options available are Keyboard or Analogue Joystick. It is not possible to control Cool Coyote using a Mouse.

As it is not always possible to tell if a joystick is attached to your PC the Joystick Option is always available even if you may not have a Joystick. Do not select this option unless a Joystick is attached to your PC and in Joystick Port 1 (if you have more than one Joystick port). If you do select Joystick by mistake or subsequently change your mind you will be able to reselect Keyboard later in the game. The same applies to changing from Keyboard back to Joystick.

The default key options are:-

Q=Jump Up A=Crouch/Fall faster O=Left/Veer P=Right/Veer <Space Bar>=Fire

A combination of Up and Left/Right will give diagonal jumps.

Jab fire to launch a small ice pellet. Duck and hold fire down to launch a snow bomb. Whilst not ducking, hold down fire to launch the current special weapon, if you have one.

Video Selection

Options available here are VGA (16 Colour Mode) and EGA. If you do not have a VGA Card the VGA option will be unavailable to you.

Sound Selection

The game supports the Roland(tm) LAPC-1, SoundBlaster(tm), Adlib (tm) and the Internal Speaker (Beeper). Any other sound card which claims to be either SoundBlaster(tm) or Adlib(tm) compatible should also be fully supported. A further option of No Sound at all is also available.

If you have a SoundBlaster(tm) card it will be the second available option. If you do not have a SoundBlaster(tm) card the second option will be Adlib(tm)

When using the SoundBlaster(tm) option the game will attempt to search for the correct PORT address, DMA Channel and IRQ for your card. Occasionally it is possible for hardware conflicts to cause the machine to lock up during the search process. If you have had any problems in the past you will have taken note of your PORT, DMA and IRQ and will be able to supply them to the game. See Command Line Options.

Speed Selection

The game has been designed with both fast and slower PCs in mind and has two sets of game data. Players with modest 8086-80286 PCs should select one of the options 1,2 or 3 and players with faster 80386 and above PCs should select one of the options 4,5 or 6. You will be prompted with the most appropriate speed for your machine.

If you have a fairly slow machine some of the higher speed settings may be unavailable, although you should always be able to select at least one setting above the optimum for your machine, to allow for inaccuracies in the power reading test. Normal options are 2 and 5, but if you want a bit of a speed advantage or are an experienced player you could select one of the other options.

Command Line Options

These are entered after the word 'FIREXMAS' (or FIREXMAS.EXE) and remove

the need for selecting options via the option boxes, as described above. If any form of valid command line option is selected then none of the above option boxes will be displayed. Any selections you make will be used and any others will have defaults, of which more follows.

Only the first two letters of each option are significant and can be in upper or lower case.

/VGA Select VGA graphics.

/EGA Select EGA graphics.

/JOY Select Joystick, you will be prompted to calibrate it later.

/KEY Select Keyboard, initially set to default keys.

/ROLAND Select Roland(tm) Board.

/ADLIB Select Adlib(tm) Board.

/BLASTER Select SoundBlaster(tm).

/BEEPER Select Beeper.

/NOSOUND Do not select any sound at all.

/SPEED= Select a game speed. Values are 1,2,3,4,5 and 6. If you select a high speed on a slow PC you will not get a faster game, but a slower one, as options 4,5 and 6 use a different set of data for faster PCs.

The default is 5, so if you have a slow PC you MUST select a different speed if you use any of these command line options.

/PORT= Select a port address for your SoundBlaster Card if selected and present. Acceptable values are 210,220,230,240,250,260 and 270. The Default is normally 220. The SoundBlaster Pro(2) can usually only accept values of 220 or 240.

/DMA= The DMA Channel for your SoundBlaster. Acceptable values are 0,1 or 3. Do NOT select 2, this is used by your Hard Disc. The Default is normally 1. Normal SoundBlasters (NOT Pro) can usually only accept a value of 1.

/IRQ= The IRQ for your SoundBlaster. Acceptable values for a Normal Blaster are 2,3,5 or 7. The Default is usually 7. Acceptable values for a SoundBlaster Pro(2) are 2,5,7 or 10. Again, the Default is usually 7.

If this is the first game you have tried with a SoundBlaster and you are having a hardware conflict and you don't know what your settings are, then you must experiment with the valid values for your card until you find a combination of DMA, PORT and IRQ that works. See your SoundCard manual for more information.

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1 2 3 4 5 6

1. Current Score
2. The number of lives remaining, including your current one. A large heart is equivalent to 5 lives.
3. Day and Night gauge. When no more days are left, its Mother-in-laws revenge!
4. Picture of Cool Coyote.
5. Weaponry and Snow Bombs available.
6. Key pieces currently held.

Snow Bombs

Cool Coyote can carry up to seven bombs at a time which will appear in the game panel. They are launched by ducking down and pressing the fire button for a short time.

The three sources of snow bombs are:

- 1) Clouds 2) bonus ice blocks 3) crystal orbs.

Freezing Enemies

One or more hits from the ice pellets or snow bombs is required to freeze each enemy. They will stay frozen for a few seconds before flashing. . In order to eliminate a meanie you must shatter it while it is frozen by walking or jumping into it. The puppies can also shatter enemies. Freezing a flying enemy will cause it to crash to the ground and shatter.

At the moment you shatter a meanie it will reveal a key part if it was carrying one accompanied by a sound effect. The key will remain where it was produced until Cool Coyote approaches it, whereupon it will chase him until picked up.

Ice Step and Bridges

About the landscape are magical ice switches that will produce temporary steps or bridges when stepped upon.

Puppies

Coyote puppies can be found within the land. If on screen or just beyond they will attempt to jump towards Cool Coyote for protection. They are too small to be concern other creatures and will not be hurt by them. Like Cool they are able to fire small ice pellets and do so when Cool fires his ice pellets.

Puppies are afraid to use moving platforms and cannot jump large gaps or into deep holes. They will wander off if left behind. They can be made to jump ahead of Cool by firing rapidly for a short time. This makes the puppies feel brave and they will move off in the direction Cool is facing. Stop firing and they will return. The puppies can also shatter frozen enemies and since they can fire ice pellets, are capable of eliminating meanies on their own.

Days and nights

The sky colour changes from day to night. After seven days and nights (when the large snowflake on the panel turns black) the fire wizard will track down Cool and hot things up for him.

Changing play options

Pressing F1 at most times will bring up a selection menu. This will allow you to select: sound and music on/off, recalibrate your joystick, redefine the keys, play some of the game tunes on the jukebox, select the size (or complete absence) of the small maps, Control of the menu is by the cursor keys. Selections are made by pressing <Space> or <Enter>.

Selecting <--<< from a sub menu will take you back to the main menu. Selecting EXIT from the main menu will take you back to the game. Pressing <ESC> at any time will take you back to the game.

Additionally, you may also save and restore your settings to/from disc. This includes your music/sound selection, joystick calibration data, small maps selection, keyboard definitions and the current high scores.

If you do not save any of your settings, the high scores are saved out to disc automatically on quitting the game, but nothing else is.

Only the full game has all the tunes available to play from the Jukebox.

Music and Sound Effects On/Off

Pressing F2 at most times will toggle the music on/off and pressing F3 will likewise toggle sound effects on/off.

Pause and Quit to DOS

Pressing <ESC> once will pause the game, pressing it a second time will abort a game, or quit to DOS if on the titles page. Pressing any other key (or fire on the joystick, if selected) will continue the game.

When the game is in 'attract mode' the <ESC> key is ignored. Only the currently selected 'FIRE' key is recognised.