

Describe.Menu

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Chapter 1

Describe.Menu

1.1 Main

Bonus Tiles
Boundary Lines
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1.2 Bonus Tiles

Bonus Tiles

When a human car passes over a Bonus Tile, the player is given a (fairly!) random pick-up. You will notice that the Tile Graphic changes when it becomes inactive, and also that once all or almost all tiles have been used, then they are all automatically reset again.

Setting up a Bonus Tile is quite easy, but some extra work is involved before the track can be used properly in a game.

Actually placing a Bonus Tile is easy - simply select the Bonus Surface(20) from the Surface Palette , and select the Bonus Tile(on) Graphic and place as you would any other tile. No special editing mode is required. The Surface takes care about warning the Game Code that this is a Special Tile. However, remember that it is only the

Surface
information that is

used and not the Tile, so you could easily have fake Bonus Squares if you felt like it! Just remember to ensure that the Surface relating to a particular Grid Square containing a Bonus Tile Graphic really is number 20. Its easy to do some general editing and forget to change surfaces when changing tiles.

Before playing the game for the 1st time you must also enter some general Bonus Tile information. Firstly, the Editor needs to know what Tile Graphic is to be used when the Bonus Tile is no longer active. This is done by selecting Tiles->Pickup Bonus Off Tile . You then simply click on the correct Graphic when the Tiles are displayed for you. These only needs to be done once per track.

You must also inform the Game when to reset all the Bonus Tiles to active. Select Project->Edit Track Info and you can then enter the total number of Bonus Tiles into the appropriate section. When this number of Bonus Tiles have been used then they will all be reset again.

Deathmatch

Bonus Tiles work in the same way on Deathmatch Tracks, though take note of the Tips section below.

Tips

Normally this simply requires you to enter the total number of Bonus Tiles on the track but you may enter less than the total amount since then players don't have to search around for ever trying to find the last tile. Its a matter of taste, especially on Deathmatch Tracks. Of course, you can also enter a number greater than the total number of Bonus Tiles so that they never get reset.

It is often a good idea to test all the Bonus Tiles in the game incase you have made a mistake with the Surfaces. I have had a number of Bonus Tiles turn out to be Big Jumps!

If you aren't sure how many tiles to place them simply check over some of our tracks. Normally between 6-12 are used on Race Tracks, and many more for Deathmatch Tracks.

1.3 Boundary Lines

Boundaries

Boundary Lines are what prevent the cars from driving off the course. If a car hits a Boundary Line then it will bounce off. It is very important to ensure that cars cannot drive very near or off the actual Map (that's the Grid you can see while editing) since this will almost certainly result in the game crashing. Driving cars through all our delightful code is severely frowned upon, and its your fault if you cause damage of any kind by allowing it!

Placing Boundary Lines requires you know your Clockwise from your Anti-Clockwise, but incase you don't.....

<pre> ^>>>v ^ v ^ v ^<<<v </pre>	<pre> v<<<^ v ^ v ^ v>>>^ </pre>
--	--

Clockwise

Anti-Clockwise

Essentially, if you draw the Boundary Lines in Clockwise order then this will keep the cars on the outside of the lines, or outside the box if they were drawn as above. So these lines are normally used on the inside of a circuit.

And conversely if you draw the lines in Anti-Clockwise order the cars are kept on the inside of the lines, or inside the box drawn above. So these lines are normally used on the very outside of a circuit/track.

"How do I know if I have got it wrong?"

It's important that Boundary Lines are heavily tested - this usually involves driving around the outside and the inside of a track hitting the walls as much as possible. If a line has been drawn the wrong way then when you hit it you will be automatically picked up and dropped back on the track. (Note that you could potentially do some nice tricks with this - we will wait and see who does one first - remember hit from one side the car will bounce, and from the other side the car is placed at the next

Jump Point
)

You may find that occasionally this happens anyway - this is very rare and usually occurs if 2 Boundary Lines don't quite connect up, but it can happen if you are just very very unlucky. If it does, then you should always check that area of the track just in case.

Of course, there is a far easier way! When you draw on the Boundary Lines you will notice that there is a dotted line perpendicular (or for the non technical term....sticking out lots) to the Boundary Line about half way along. Cars should only be able to approach the Boundary Line from

this marked side.

It may seem complex at first but after a few minutes it will all become second nature. If you are ever unsure, refer to almost any of our tracks to see how we use them.

To start placing Boundary Lines select Mode->Edit Boundaries[b] .

Mode->Set New Boundary Start Pos[n] is used for when you want to break off from the current chain of lines, and wish to start a new chain.

For example, you may have just drawn a box and wish to start a new box. Once Box 1 is finished select the above option and you may start drawing all over again, rather than have the current line still connected to the previous line.

Deathmatch

Boundary Lines are identical on Deathmatch Tracks.

Display

Boundary Lines are displayed as single lines, and they have a dotted line indicating which side the cars should be on when they hit the line. This dotted line is always half way along the Boundary Line.

Tips

Simply ensure the lines are heavily tested. Watch out for lines not quite connecting up, especially if editing on a zoomed out view.

1.4 Cameras

Cameras

Cameras are used in the game when Tracking Camera is selected from the in-game menu. They may be placed at any position on the track, and in any order. The nearest camera to the viewed car is automatically selected. Tracks should not have more than approx 20 cameras since it can become disconcerting when the active camera is repeatedly changing.

Mode->Edit Cameras[c] is used for camera editing.

Deathmatch

Laying out cameras on a deathmatch track is no different from on a race track.

Display

Cameras are indicated by diamonds with the camera number by them.

Tips

Best positions for cameras are on the inside or outside of corners, but when placed in the middle of the track you can often get some exciting views!

Cameras are best placed when everything else has been done on the track. i.e. last of all!

1.5 Cash

Cash

Cash is picked up in championship games only, and shouldn't be required by any users since these games may only be setup by ourselves. For those who are brave enough to amend a decrunched season file you should be able to work out how to add a new championship. In which case you should also be able to work out how to place the cash and set the amount its worth!

Hint...Try the Object Menu...

Cash will not appear in the game unless it is a championship game.

Deathmatch

Cash is irrelevant in Deathmatch Games.

Display

Cash is displayed as a diamond, usually a different colour from the cameras. A credit sign is also shown, alongside the actual cash value. If an H is also displayed then the cash has not been placed on the ground.

Tips

Don't place too much, and don't put it too far out of the way.
If you can hide some, do it!

1.6 Computer Routes

Computer Routes

This is one of the most complex problems you will come across when creating a track. You must somehow tell the computer cars where they must drive.

The computer cars drive approximately in between 2 lines that you lay out on the track. One line (usually Green) must **always** be INSIDE the other line (usually Yellow). If these lines cross at all then you will find the computer cars start acting silly and driving around in circles! Much testing is needed to ensure the computer routes are functioning both properly and adequately - the wider the gap between the lines then the more the computer cars will swerve about, but the smaller this gap the more the cars may snake around unable to overtake each other. How to set this varies on each track, but feel free to examine how we have done them. There is no right or wrong way to do it - as long as the race feels ok.

Select Mode->Edit Routes[r] to start editing the Computer Routes.

Place the very first point a Grid square or two in front of the Start/Finish line. Then subsequent points should be placed around the track, in order of completing the lap. This set of lines will always be the inner set. If you aren't sure how often to place the points look at many of our tracks. It's yet again a case of trial and error at first, but generally every 2-4 grid blocks is sufficient. On tight turns you may have to use more points. You should not place any points very close together as this could confuse the computer cars.

Now you must place the other "outer" line down. You have actually already placed this - I just didn't tell you. It defaults to wherever you placed the original "inner" line. To move it towards the outside you simply click on each point of the "inner" line and you will find you can drag a new Yellow line away, to leave a Green line in place.

Play around as much as you feel is necessary on this. If you make a backup of some of our tracks then it may be useful to modify the Computer Routes on them to see the effects.

Deathmatch

Deathmatch Tracks should not contain any Computer Routes.

Display

Computer Routes are displayed as a single line when originally placed, usually white, and then as Green(inner) and Yellow(outer) lines.

Tips

The Inner/Outer terms may have confused you, especially when it comes to handling a crossover. But just load up and examine an existing track and all will become obvious.

Computer Routes should not be placed until the Track Layout is finalised and tested on 1 Player only. Sometimes you find you must make minor modifications after seeing how the computer cars perform, but its better than having to place all the Routes down again.

To observe how the computer cars perform, don't actually drive your own car in a game. Start a game as a 1 player game with 1 computer car, and use the Camera (F1/F2/F3 or in-game menus for the camera controls) to watch how the computer goes around the track. Once you are happy with 1 computer car's route, set all 7 computer cars going and see how they perform together.

1.7 Jump Points

Jump Points

If a car gets destroyed in any way, such as sinking or being shot, then it must be placed back on the track somewhere. Near each

Track Path
point

you will see a cross. If the car is heading towards a particular Track Path point and it is destroyed then it will be repositioned at this cross, which is termed a Jump Point. Each Jump Point should be located near the associated Track Path point.

Mode->Edit Jump Point[j] is used for Jump Point editing.

Deathmatch

Jump Points are not relevant for deathmatch games as players are repositioned on a random start point if they die.

Display

Jump Points are represented by crosses, connected to their associated Track Path point with a dotted line. They are usually red.

Tips

Remember that sometimes it's wise to move jump points away from computer car routes since otherwise the player could find themselves immediately hit from behind.

Also remember to reposition these points if their associated Track Path point is moved. Its easy to leave them in completely the wrong place.

Look at any of our tracks for examples of where to place Jump Points, and where not to!

1.8 Objects

Objects

Objects are those things like Lights, Posts, Barrels, and so on. If you wish to place objects you must first have Loaded them into the Editor. See the Objects section on how to do this and on how to initialise the Object Details.

Placing objects is very easy if you follow these simple steps :

- 1 - Select Mode->Edit Objects[o]
- 2 - Select Objects->Type->Object <number> where you select the object which you would like placed.
- 3 - Place the selected object in however many places you wish.

Deathmatch

Objects on Deathmatch tracks are no different to Race Tracks.

Display

Objects are displayed as circles approximating the size of the object, each containing a diamond and the object number.

Tips

If you are placing objects close to each other and they are set to bounce the cars off themselves, then it is often best to use Boundary Lines to control the collision rather than the object itself. This has been done on various tracks of our own, especially the grasslands tracks where trees are often close together. Otherwise you sometimes find cars getting stuck in tiny gaps between the objects. The same problem

occurs even more often when placing an object near a Boundary Line.

For an example of how to avoid this problem look at Grasslands_1 Position (11,16).

Also remember that when defining the object you don't have to make it solid so that you could place apparently solid objects to hide secret paths.

Graphics Specifications

1.9 Secret Paths

Secret Paths

Secret Paths are used so that players may take short-cuts on tracks. At first sight they may look tricky to set up, but they are in fact very easy if you follow these steps :

- 1 - Select Mode->Edit Secrets[v]
- 2 - Locate where you would like to have a secret path/short cut.
- 3 - Draw the secret path line all the way across the short cut, ensuring that to take the short cut the player must cross this line.
- 4 - Look at the
Track Path
point number that the player would be heading for if he was just about to take the short cut. Enter this number as the start number when requested.
- 5 - Look at the Track Path point number that the player would be heading for if he had just taken the short cut. Enter this number as the end number.

Deathmatch

Secret Paths have no effect on deathmatch tracks.

Display

Secret Paths are displayed as a single line, with the Start-End Track Path numbers at one end.

Tips

Gothic City 1 has a Secret Path at (30,34) if you are still unsure, as do

several other tracks.

If you start playing with the Track Path make sure you redo the Secret Path if necessary. As such its a good idea to enter these paths as almost the last thing you do. Always ensure that it is working properly by testing crossing it at various positions - if it has worked then your lap will be counted.

Secret Paths should not be placed very near the start or end of the Race Track.

[Secret Paths and short-cuts are the same thing]

1.10 Start Points / Starting Grid

Start Points

The Start Points indicate where the cars start in a race. You simply place the position of the Pole Position car, and the grid is calculated from there. The cars must always start facing North or East (that's Up and Right for the compassly challenged). Cars behind are placed 1 square back and 1 square to the side as appropriate. Load any of our tracks for examples and it will become obvious!

To place the Pole Position car select Mode->Set Car Position(k) , then click in the centre of the Grid Square where you would like the car to start.

Deathmatch

On Deathmatch Tracks 8 separate Start Points must be placed. You will find that as long as the track has been defined as a Deathmatch Track (from Project->Edit Track Info) you can place each Start Position one after another. Cars may start facing North, South, East or West.

Display

Start Points are shown with a Star Trek style /\ sign pointing in the direction the cars start facing. If the track is a Deathmatch Track then 8 of these are displayed, along with numbers 0-7.

Tips

Well, none really. Except don't start several cars in one place on Deathmatch Tracks. That would be a very silly idea and your computer will probably explode at your stupidity and it won't be our fault.

1.11 Surfaces

Surfaces

The Surface upon which the cars travel can vary markedly. Simply put, most surfaces vary in Speed, Dust Graphic (grass or mud flicking up for example), Bumpiness, and Special Effect.

There are a whole variety of surfaces which can be displayed and selected using the Surface Palette (switched on from the Settings Menu). When placing Tiles then the surfaces underneath each tile are set to the currently selected surface in the Surface Palette. If the Surface Palette is not displayed you can also see the current surface on the Info Palette (switched on from the Settings Menu). Surfaces may also be selected by typing the number on the keypad.

To place only Surfaces rather than Tiles as well, use the following menu :
Mode->Edit Surface[s] .

You will find that each Tile is split up into 4x4 (16) surfaces. Each one of these can be modified individually. To place a surface while in the Surface Edit mode simply Click the Left Mouse Button whilst over the appropriate position. Its recommended this is done whilst fully zoomed into the track (press F5). By hold down the mouse button you can Paint the track.

The Right Mouse Button may be used in a similar way, except it is always Surface 0, which is a Smooth Road surface.

Special Tiles

Special Tiles, such as Jumps, Weapon Selectors, or Water, are all placed using Surfaces. The Graphic actually has nothing to do with what will happen in the game - its the Surface Information that makes things happen.

So for a Water Graphic Tile you would use Surface 18 perhaps (Water - Sink). There are several special types of surface, and they are all clearly labelled on the Surface Palette .

The only Surface requiring any extra explanation is the "?" Bonus Surface. See Information on the
Bonus Tiles
to see how they work.

Dust

Some Surfaces have an associated Graphic so that when a car travels over them some Dust is seen. This dust may be seen as grass, mud, water, etc. Surfaces with such a graphic are clearly labelled in the Surface Palette. Some Surfaces have similar properties but both exist purely because one has a Dust Graphic and one does not.

Deathmatch

Surfaces affect Deathmatch Tracks in the same way as normal tracks.

Display

Surfaces are represented by a Character - use the Surface Palette to check what Surface each particular Character refers to.

They are only displayed in Zoom modes F4 and F5 - 50% and 100%.

Surfaces are best turned off using View->Show Surfaces[S] for normal editing as they slow down screen redraws.

Tips

When placing some surfaces, such as Bonuses, Jumps, Water, and so on, it is important to consider the Collision Detection. In XTR this is quite simple and refers to approximately the centre of the car only (for extra speed). As such you have to be careful not to allow cars to drive much over water and also to not let them sink too early for example. Examine any of our tracks to see how Surfaces are placed with respect to the Tile Graphic . Pay particular attention to where the more destructive squares border the track, and Jump squares

If you want to include any
 shortcuts/secret paths
 then a good place
is often across a sinkable surface. Simply set up the Secret Path accordingly and set up the surface of the shortcut to not be sinkable. Although it will look the same in the game, you will in fact be able to drive over what appears to be water for example.

You will find that there is a Jump and a Jump(2) surface defined. If you wish for players to land on consecutive jumps then you should alternate between Jump Surfaces.

You will also find that some surfaces are defined twice. You may use either surface for it makes no difference.

1.12 Track Path

Track Path

The Track Path is without doubt the most difficult part of XTR Track Creation to understand, but as soon as you have managed it successfully

once then it will be very easy the next time (usually!).

The Track Path is used to calculate when a car has completed a lap. It has to be accurate enough to prevent cheating, and also must be positioned so that laps aren't missed accidentally.

Probably the best way to explain how to set up these paths is to examine one of our tracks. Follow these instructions - it may be best to print these out.

Load Road_Circuit_1

Use the View menu to configure the editor only to show :-

Boundary Lines
Paths
Lap Markers
Car Start

Press F3 and move the whole track into view.

(ensure you know how
Boundary Lines
work before reading on)

You should ignore the dashed (red) line for a while.

At any time you may switch the Tiles on/off by pressing <Shift T> if it helps.

You will see the
Car Start
Point marked on the left side of the track,
about halfway down. Above this you will see the Number 11. This is the final Track Path point, and lies on the Start/Finish Line. If you don't believe me then display the tiles again.

You will also see a dotted yellow line going across the Start/Finish line. This is called a Lap Marker. A car must cross over all such Lap Markers in the correct order in order to complete a lap. In this case we are looking at Lap Marker 11, which happens to be the final one. You will see that the line stretches all the way across the track, between the Boundary Lines on each side of the track.

The reason for this is quite obvious. Cars must cross Lap Markers to complete a lap. However, if they can squeeze between the end of a Lap Marker and a Boundary Line then the computer will never know the car should have completed a lap because the line might never have been crossed. Its always best to be safe and put the Lap Marker lines well into the Boundary Lines. You will notice that this is what we have done.

Now you understand the basics of it you could try to alter the track so that laps aren't counted. To do this ensure you are in the Lap Marker Editing Mode (Mode->Edit Lap Marker[1]) and if you click on an end point of the Lap Marker you will find you can drag it around for as long as you are holding the left mouse button. Drag the point on the left side of the track so that there is a substantial gap between it and the

Boundary Line, such that you could drive a car through that gap. Save the track UNDER A NEW NAME (or backup the old track) and play XTR on single race with this new track. You will notice that if you drive where you left this gap then your lap will not be counted.

Anyway, go back to the Editor and we will see how the rest of the Lap Markers work.

You will find a Lap Marker present at all the Track Path points, and thus when placing these points you must consider exactly where you wish to place a Lap Marker. Also, each Lap Marker may only be Horizontal or Vertical (that's flat and errr...tall!) so you must be able to stretch the Lap Marker all the way across that section of the track (or at least the section over which cars are allowed to go).

Now run your finger around the track displayed, and you will find that wherever you go you simply have to cross over the Lap Markers in the correct order (which is why you can't cheat at crossovers) if you wish to complete the lap. And its as simple as that!

Now, lets try and place our own Track Path. One of the things to consider is how many points to plot. This must be done with care since moving them around afterwards in order to try and fit extra points in is very tedious. The best way to handle this it to plot them every 4-5 grid squares, and more often on corners (especially tight ones). Load up a few other tracks if you wish to see how they have been set up.

To Edit the Track Path select Mode->Edit Track Path[p] .

Continuing on the same track, select Mode->Clear All Path Lines . Now, with the Tiles displayed if you wish, plot your own Track Path. Don't worry about the Lap Markers as they can be edited whenever you like. The first Track Path point should be somewhere after the Start/Finish line. Draw a few points but don't worry about completing the circuit.

NOTE : All XTR circuits MUST be Clockwise, and you must draw on the Track Path as if you were actually going around the circuit in the correct direction. The order is very important.

Return to Lap Marker Edit Mode, and Zoom in (press F5) so you can see the first Track Path point you plotted. You will notice that this is the only one that is not numbered - don't worry about this, its perfectly normal.

You will notice that the 1st Lap Marker is probably vertical, but it depends where the next point is. You will also notice that it has an arrow head on one end. This arrow head indicates that this side of the Lap Marker Line will be on a car's right side if it is crossing the line correctly.

You can rotate the Lap Marker around simply by clicking on one of the end points and twisting it to the horizontal/vertical (as appropriate). Don't worry about its positioning at this point. When you release the mouse button the Lap Marker will snap into place. If you wish to get the arrow around the other side of the track (it will normally be correct anyway) then just twist the Lap Marker by 180\textdegree{}

You can now pull each end of the Lap Marker into the correct position, as explained previously. If you need to change its positioning at all then you Edit the Track Path point, and when you have moved it (while in the Track Path Edit Mode) you will notice the Lap Marker has moved with it. Lap Markers are always fixed onto their Track Path point.

You then repeat this process on each Lap Marker, ensuring that the final one is across the Start/Finish Line.

If you ever get confused then save what you have done, and reload the original track to check how we have done it.

"So what are those red things?"

The red crosses are

Jump Points

, and there is a separate section

relating to those. Jump Points default to each Track Path point and care must be taken to keep them located near each other if the Track Path is altered at all. The Jump Points are connected to their associated Track Path point with a red dotted line.

The red dashed line is the

Weapon Path

which is also explained in

a separate section. It defaults to the Track Path so you will only see it if specifically editing it or if you have moved the Track Path points. Again, care must be taken when altering the Track Path since the Weapon Path points must always be kept fairly near their associated Track Path points. If you aren't sure how close then check over several of our tracks - they do not have to be very close to each other, just not too far away.

Deathmatch

Deathmatch Tracks don't need a Track Path as such, but they do need one drawn out. This time you aren't worried about anything except where the path goes - this path is effectively the Weapon Path for weapons that require it. We use them sometimes to zig zag around a track, or just go around and around it. Once the Track Path is drawn on it is of no consequence since the Weapon Path can be edited totally separately.

Confused? Look at some of our Deathmatch Tracks. Some fun could be had by placing Weapon Paths such that the weapons will go backwards and forwards so that to get to any "?" squares you have to get past them.

Display

Track Path : Single line, usually yellow. All Track Path points except for the first are numbered - this is for use with Secret Paths (short cuts).

Lap Marker : Dotted line, usually yellow. An arrow head on one side indicates that if a car is crossing the line correctly then that side of the line is towards the Right side of the car.

Tips

Practice on Road_Circuit_1 as this contains a basic crossover and no difficult surfaces or secret paths. You can always load up the original to check how it was done. Once you know what to do you will find it very easy - it's just understanding it in the first place.

The descriptions above have related to the Lap Markers extending to

Boundary Lines
, but what about tracks with Water (etc) on them?

In these cases the Lap Markers should be extended to well into the water, such that there is no way a car can drive around it. Check any of the Floating City, Volcanic, and Tropical Island tracks for examples. They are a little more difficult to get right. For example, on the Volcanic track I had to consider that it was possible to get a Jump Pick-up and cut corners slightly. I had to allow for this by being careful with Lap Markers and/or using
Secret Paths

.

"It just won't count my lap, and I don't know why!"

Several things could have happened. The usual one will be that an arrow head is on the wrong side of the Lap Marker, or that a Lap Marker is not being crossed for some reason. However, if all else fails then reset them all and do it again, remembering that Jump and Weapon stuff must also be put down all over again.

NOTE : Please do not contact us if you are having a problem with this. Always read the instructions carefully and check over the several existing tracks. We cannot answer queries on this sort of problem because we just don't have the time unfortunately.

1.13 Lap Markers

Lap Markers are an integral part of the
Track Path

.

1.14 Weapon Path

Weapon Path

When firing certain weapons, such as the Sheep or one of the Missiles, they will follow this Path quite accurately. You will find that each Track Path point has an associated Weapon Path point. This can be moved about to wherever required, but it should always be kept in the vicinity of the original

Track Path
point.

Mode->Edit Weapon Path[w] is used for Weapon Path editing.

Deathmatch

These are set up as with race tracks, however remember that the Track Path could go basically anywhere, and since the Weapon Path defaults to following the

Track Path
there should be no need to change it. If you do need to change it then you needn't touch the Track Path since it is only the Weapon Path data that is used in Deathmatch Games.

Display

Weapon Paths are marked on the track with dashed lines, usually red.

Tips

No real tips except to look how we have used them.
