Hexview 3.0 Documentation

Introduction

Hexview is a stripped down version of the hexmap editing program Hexmap 3.0. It has the ability to view and print maps generated by hexmap, but not edit them. Hexview does come with a number of pre-defined maps that gamers can print out, but is primarily designed for use in play-by-email wargames where the moderator of the game uses Hexmap to generate a map at the start of each turn and email it to all players. Before Hexview was release to the public, the moderator either had to generate a large postscript file and have the players dump it to a printer, or have all the players get a copy of Hexmap. If the players have a copy of Hexview, the moderator can send around the data files which are 1/10 the size of the postscript output.

If you have any suggestions on what would make Hexview a better tool for your use, or if you would like to get a copy of Hexmap to edit and create your own maps, please send me a note at the address at the end of this document.

The file HEXMAP30.WRI contains the instructions for using Hexmap, and should be included in this archive. The rest of this file is a reduced and edited version dealing only with Hexview features.

A Quick Tour of New Features

Place the hexview.exe, hexview.dll, and the *.dat and *.def data files in the same subdirectory. Start hexview from inside Windows 3.0. Go to the "File:Open Map" menu choice, and double-click on the file HUNT.DAT. This will load in the data for a modified version of the map for a board game called Elefant Hunt. Enlarge the Hexmap window to cover most of your screen. Select "Utility:Zoom:50%" so the map will fit on the screen. Select "File:Draw". The HUNT.MAP file has the following features:

- a custom title in user-specified font and size
- the numeric labels on the hexes have been turned off
- Hexes have three attributes:
    - hex fill pattern
    - symbol
    - symbol fill pattern

In HUNT.MAP, the triangles represent hexes with animals in them, with the orientation of the triangle used to encode a number from 1 to 6. The hexagons are city hexes, and the other patterns are used for quicksand, rivers, swamps, and special hexes.

Other maps are included with this archive. To view them, first close the active file and follow the above procedure.

Reference

The following paragraphs deal with the menu items which are enabled in Hexview. Some items always appear grayed-out; these features are available in the Hexmap program only.

File:Draw

Drawing a large hexmap takes a bit of time, enough time that if the program redraws the map every time something erases or changes part of the window it gets annoying. Therefore, the map is only redrawn when the "File:Draw" or the "Utility:Redraw Screen" menu items are selected (Redraw Screen is faster). If you have a fast machine, you might want to select the "Utility:Auto Redraw" item. Future versions of Hexmap will try to improve redrawing speed.

File:Print

Printing does not depend upon the map being drawn on the screen, and the zoom level for the screen drawing has no effect on the printout. Printing to a laser printer is very fast. Printing to a dot matrix printer, or some other sort of printer which uses "banding" is very slow. This is a function of Windows, although I am working on improving the printing speed. Time to print increases linearly with the number of hexagons in the map.

Printing to a file

It may be convenient to print a map to a file rather than to the printer. This way you can copy the file to the printer whenever you need a new copy of the map. This is faster than going through the whole printing process every time you need a new map. Printing to a file can be very useful, for example, when running a play-by-email wargame. To print to a file, refer to your Windows manual, or try and follow these directions:

In the Control Panel -- Printers program, select one of your installed printers, and click on "Configure". Change the "Port" selection to "FILE:". Now every time you print a file, Windows will pop up a dialog box asking for the filename to print to, rather than sending it to the printer. Hit "OK", then "OK" again to get out of the Printers program.

Notes on Postscript files:

Not many people have postscript printers in their

home, but you can easily set up windows to print postscript output to a file. Install a postscript printer, Configure it with "FILE" as it's port, and you're set. Warning: windows puts a Ctrl-D character at the beginning and end of postscript files. If you copy a file with Ctrl-D's to a printer on, for example, a unix network, it may not recognize the file a a set of postscript commands, and instead print out 100 pages of text instead of your map! Use an editor (like emacs) to delete the first and last Ctrl-D characters of the file.

Datafiles

Hexmap uses two data files for each map. The first file is 10000 words long, and the hex number 0101-9999 is used as the offset into this file. Each word has three fields for the fill pattern, symbol, and symbol fill pattern. Version 2 of hexmap introduced a second file (while still using the version 1.0 file) to store the Title, size, font, and hex label information. If Hexmap comes across a *.dat map file from version 1.0 that doesn't have a *.def file, it will create a *.def file automatically.

Where to Reach Me:

All comments (and orders) are welcome. Registered users get free upgrades to all new versions. Hexmap is currently at version 3.0. A public domain version which only views and prints hex maps (Hexview) is freely available. Source code for Hexmap is available to registered users. Hexmap is written in the Actor language, version 3.1 using the ObjectGraphics library and the EDEN project management extensions.

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