

COMBAT CHESS[®]

Combat Chess is The Avalon Hill Game Company's
Trademark for its Microcomputer Chess-like Armored Combat Game

Introduction

Combat Chess is a game with the sound and visual effects of an arcade game, but requires the skills of strategy and tactics. It is played on a background screen called the game board. You select the board to play on from a library of ten. Though the board may portray a "realistic" background containing rivers, trees and mountains, it is actually similar to a chess board, only divided into 20 squares across by 11 squares down.

Each player has a set of pieces: a battle cruiser, tanks and armored cars. Each takes turns maneuvering about the game board and firing at enemy pieces. To win the game, you must destroy your opponent's battle cruiser before he destroys yours.

A good introduction to the game is to watch a demonstration game where the computer plays both sides. See the "A Demonstration Game" section for more information.



GETTING STARTED

First, read over the following sections: "Game options," "General play" and "Controlling your pieces during the game." Use your first game to get familiar with the joystick. Don't worry about winning or losing. Once you feel comfortable moving and shooting with your pieces, then read the sections titled "Cursor status lines" and "Game status screens." Play the game some more, paying attention to the status lines. To play a competitive game against the computer, you will have to be aware of the status of all pieces in the game.

Minimum Accessories Needed To Play

- 48K RAM www.atarimania.com
- Atari[®] Disk Drive
- One Atari Joystick

LOADING THE GAME

1. With the computer turned off, plug a joystick into controller port #1 if you're playing the Red side, or #2 if you're playing the Black side. For two players, plug one joystick into each port.
2. Remove all cartridges, including the BASIC cartridge.
3. Turn on the disk drive.
4. When the busy light goes off, insert the game diskette and close the drive door.
5. Turn on your computer. On the 800XL, press the OPTION key down before you turn on the computer. Keep the button down until you see the title screen.
6. When the title page appears, the game has loaded.

A DEMONSTRATION GAME

When the title page is displayed, push the SELECT key to begin the demonstration game. You are now watching a game where the computer is playing both sides. You can watch the game to its conclusion, or abort the game by pressing the OPTION key. Keep the key pressed until the next screen appears. Press Y to end the game, then, press the START key when you hear the music play to return to the title screen.

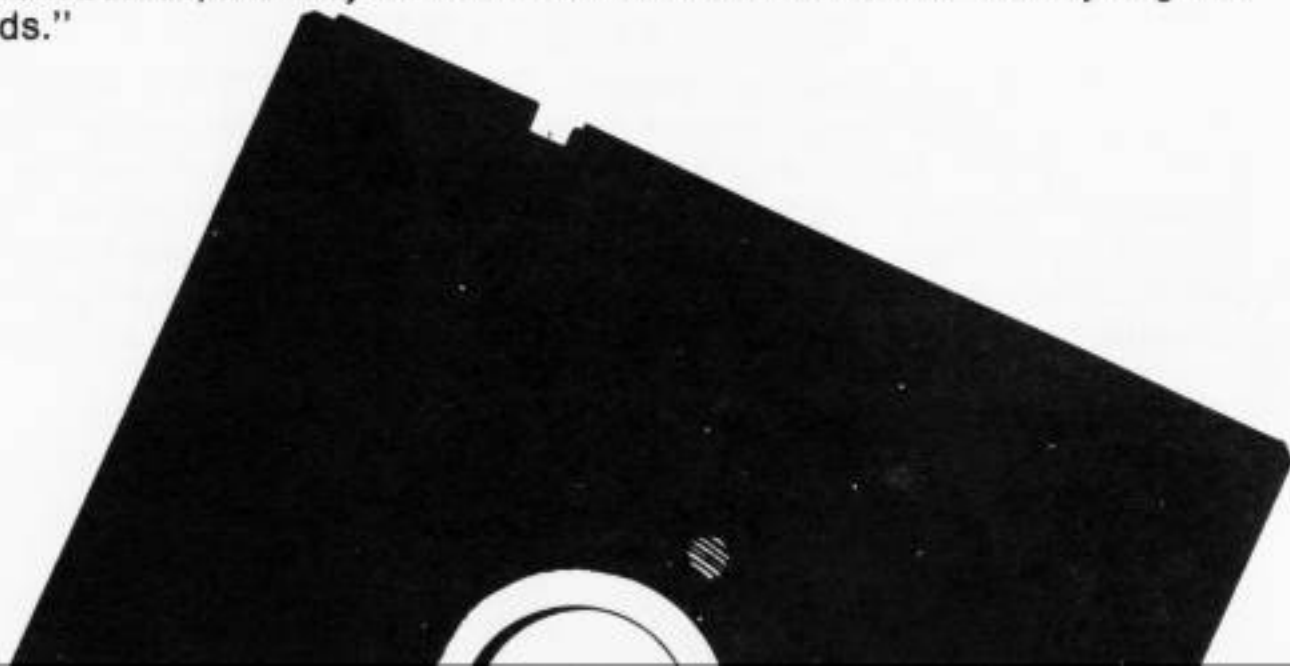
TO PLAY THE GAME

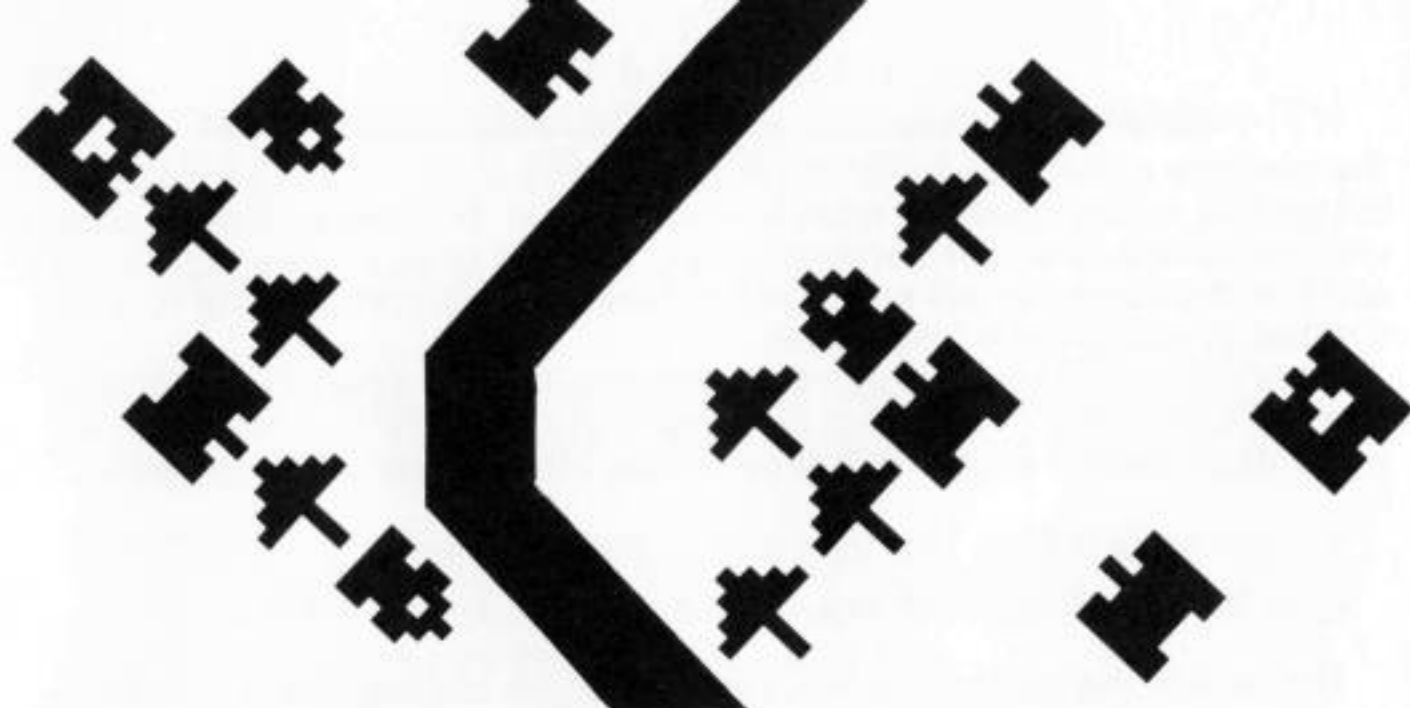
Load the game following the instructions in the previous section. When the title page is displayed, push the OPTION key to go to the options setting screen. Use the SELECT key to scroll through the available choices for each option, and the OPTION key to move on to the next option.

There are seven changeable options in Combat Chess:

Game Board

This is the background screen the game will be played on. There are ten different boards, and they are described in the section titled "Library of game boards."





LIBRARY OF GAME BOARDS

There are ten game boards stored on disk. The first five boards depict "natural" terrain; the rest abstract or unusual terrain.

For boards 1-5 and 10, the following rules apply:

Trees: moving through a tree square costs more fuel and reduces your movement allowance. You cannot shoot through trees.

Water: they can be shot over, but crossed only at bridges.

Bridges: allow movement over water, but can be destroyed.

Mountains: blocks movement and fire, and cannot be destroyed.

Here's what each board looks like. The board number corresponds to the game board number found on the options screen.

Board 1: a river runs from the upper left to the lower right of the screen. There are mountains to the right of the river, and in the lower left part. Three bridges cross the river, and the rest is heavily forested.

Board 2: there are three heavily forested islands connected by bridges.

Board 3: a river separating the two armies runs through a small valley.

Board 4: a river runs diagonally with a large island in the center. Bridges connect the mountainous island to the mainland.

Board 5: a river runs from top to bottom, with bridges and mountains on both sides.

Board 6: this board is divided into a checkerboard five blocks across by three blocks down. Some blocks allow free movement, some don't. Units can pass diagonally between the block. You can shoot across the center block, but you cannot move across it.

Board 7: a black and yellow cross is in the center of the board. Units can only fire through the yellow center, and cannot move or fire through the black.

Board 8: the same as #7, except that the field is smaller.

Board 9: this checkerboard screen allows units to move through the white squares, but not through the grey. The grey squares can be destroyed, permitting movement and fire. In the center are purple and black squares. The purple squares permit fire but not movement. The black squares block movement and fire.

Board 10: it is the same background as #1 except that The background is black, and the terrain and the Red army are light grey. We recommend playing the Red army against the computer.

THE CHARTS

Because the computer can handle numbers efficiently, it can keep track of things that would normally require a bookkeeper. In Combat Chess, each unit has a limited amount of ammo and fuel, and as you move your units and fire, the computer will keep track of these numbers. Plus, it will resolve combat by using the tables below.

Every shot will not land on its intended target. There is a percentage chance that the shot will go astray and hit a patch of ground or another unit. The percentage chance is determined by finding the answers to two questions:

1. How far is it from the firing unit to the target unit?
2. Is the attacking unit firing along a diagonal line, or not?

The farther the unit has to fire, the greater the chance that it will miss. Likewise, the chance of hitting a target by firing one square along a diagonal is less than that of firing one square horizontally or vertically, because there is a greater distance when firing along a diagonal.

Anyhow, you do not have to go over the tables below in order to play Combat Chess. But once you get the hang of the game, you may want to come back and learn more about the units you are commanding. The essence of good generalship is knowing the strengths and limitations of those who serve under you.

Range	Odds of Hitting Horizontally/ Vertically	Odds of Hitting Diagonally
1	100%	98%
2	94%	89%
3	88%	81%
4	82%	72%
5	76%	64%
6	70%	56%
7	64%	47%
8	58%	39%
9	52%	
10	46%	
11	40%	

Movement Allowance

Horizontally and Vertically/Diagonally

Battle cruisers: 2 squares/1 square

Tanks: 4 squares/3 squares

Armored cars: 7 squares/5 squares

Fuel

Each unit has a gas tank, and as it moves it consumes fuel. The farther the move, the more fuel is used. That is, a unit moving five squares in one turn consumes more gas than a unit moving two squares in one move, then three squares in the second. Once the fuel is gone, the unit cannot move any farther.

Units

The Red army may have up to three tanks and three armored cars. The Black army may have up to five tanks and five armored cars.

Starts First

The Red or the Black army may start first.

Computer Playing

There are three ways to set this option: the computer playing both sides, the computer playing Red or Black, or the computer not playing at all.

Time Limit

Each army has a clock with a time limit in which each player must move. This can be set for 1 to 30 minutes for each player. We have found that most games will easily take less than 30 minutes to play.

Moves Per Turn

Each player may make from 1 to 20 moves per turn.

In addition, the choice of the shoot option (see below) can affect the moves per turn option. With shoot option #1, the more moves per turn, the faster the pace of the game and the better the computer plays. We recommend setting it for three to five moves per turn. Under option #2, the more moves per turn, the faster the pace of the game and the poorer the computer plays. We recommend setting it one to three moves per turn.

Shoot Option

There are two options to choose from. Option #1 lets you shoot at any piece at any time. This makes for a more action-filled game. In Option #2, all your firing must be done before movement. This results in a slower, strategic game.

FIRE & MOVEMENT

Use the joystick to order units to move and shoot at enemy pieces. The cursor (appearing as a hollow yellow box) can be in one of three modes: move, fire, and select. The mode is selected by pressing the fire button. You can tell which mode it is in by whether there is a white cross, white square, or nothing within the cursor:

A white cross means that the cursor is in the Fire mode. With the joystick, move the cross until it is on a target (another unit, a bridge, or a tree). Pressing the fire button will order the unit to fire. Note: the computer will only let you fire at a valid target, and if the unit has run out of ammo, it cannot fire.

A white box means that the cursor is in the Move mode. With the joystick, move the box to the square where you want the unit to move. Pressing the fire button will order the unit to move there. Note: if the unit has run out of fuel, it cannot move.



If there is neither a white box or a white cross within the cursor, that means that it is in the select mode. The cursor can be moved anywhere.

The SELECT, OPTION, START and ESC keys have specific functions:

SELECT: tells you what units are left, and what shape they are in. Press it once to get the status of your units, again to get your opponents' status and the third time will return to the game.

OPTION: orders your side to surrender.

START: ends your turn before you have used all your moves.

ESC: will pause the game until you hit another key.

If you run out of time, the computer will end the game and declare you the loser. You do not have to move or shoot during your turn, but if neither side moves or shoots for four turns, the computer declares a stalemate. When the game ends, the final screen is displayed announcing the winner. Press the START key to return to the title screen.

C U R S O R S T A T U S L I N E

There are two lines at the bottom of the screen. The top line gives the status of the unit the yellow cursor is on; the bottom line about the unit the white cross is on.

MM:SS * SQ = 11, GM = 11, AM = 11, FL = 111
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MM:SS: this is the time clock, ticking away the seconds remaining until the end of the game. Each player has his own clock.

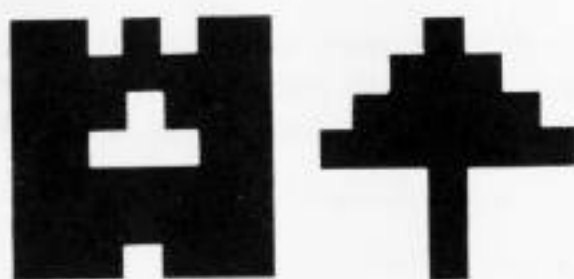
SQ: this tells the unit's terrain hit points

GM: this tells the unit's hit points

AM: this tells how much ammo that unit has left

FL: this tells how much fuel that unit has left

The status line can also keep track of projected fuel use. When the cursor is in the move mode, the fuel number on the bottom line will show how much fuel will be consumed should the unit move to that square.



	Maximum Capacity	Fuel per number of squares moved						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Battle Cruiser	240							
horiz/vert		12	27					
diagonally		16						
Tank	240							
horiz/vert		4	10	18	28			
diagonally		5	17	33				
Armored Car	160							
horiz/vert		1	3	6	10	15	21	28
diagonally		1	5	11	19	28		

Ammo

Each piece has a cannon. Its range and power varies with the type of unit it is. When a cannon shot hits another piece, a number of hits is subtracted from that unit's remaining hit points.

	Battle Cruiser	Tank	Armored Car
Maximum Capacity	16	16	8
Range			
horiz/vert	11	7	4
diagonally	8	5	3
Damage Per Shot	5	4	4

Damage

Each unit has a number of hit points. When a unit is shot, points are taken away. If a piece has zero hit points, it is destroyed. For example, if a tank fires and hits, the target's total hit points is reduced by four. Bridges and trees also can be destroyed by fire.

Unit Hit Points

Battle Cruiser: 30
 Tank: 24
 Armored Car: 18

Terrain Damage

Gunners can fire more accurately if the target doesn't move. Each unit has terrain hit points that go down at the same rate as its own hit points. But there is one difference: the unit's terrain hit points is reset every time the unit moves. Since the terrain's hit points is less than the unit's, it can be destroyed faster if it stays in place.

Unit Terrain Hit Points

Battle Cruiser: 15
 Tank: 12
 Armored Car: 9

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QUESTIONS OF PLAY

The clarity of these rules has been verified by *Software Testers of Universal Microcomputer Programmers (STUMP)* and deemed "complete" in all facets of instruction. Please re-read them in areas that seem unclear at first reading. Questions on play can be answered by the factory *only* upon receipt of a self-addressed envelope bearing first-class postage.

IF YOU CANNOT LOAD THE PROGRAM

1. Check your equipment carefully to be sure that all cables and connections are correct.

2. Re-read the section in your computer's manual that tells you how to load software. Try to load software again.

3. If possible, load another program from a tape or disk you know works on your computer. This will prove that your equipment works. Try once more to load your game.

4. The normal reason software will not load is tape recorder or disk drive head misalignment. Your computer may be able to save and load programs on its own disk drive, but be unable to read software made on a different disk drive for this reason. Be sure your heads are correctly aligned. Your local computer store or dealer can help you with this.

5. If the program still cannot be loaded, send the software, with a complete description of the problem (what type of computer you have, what the computer says, if anything, when you try to load the software or play the game, and what you did to try to get it to load) to:

Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games

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Baltimore, Maryland 21214

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Defective software will be replaced.