

Metal Warrior 4: Agents of Metal GBA V1.3

A Covert Bitops production in 2012

0. THE STORY SO FAR

(Added for the GBA version. Warning: spoilers for the games Metal Warrior 1-3. This is intended as a quickstart so that one can jump directly to part 4 and have some kind of idea what is going on and who the characters are.)

In the violent near future, there existed a war/thrash metal band CYBERPRIEST, whose music brought strength and hope to the hessians struggling from day to day. It consisted of these talented individuals:

FAUSTUS (Bass/Vocals) - a natural leader and perceptive songwriter

SADOK (Guitar) - an intolerable personality, whose buzzsaw-like playing and dedication more than made up for that (he joined the military for a time just to get war-metal writing inspiration, it appeared)

PHANTASM (Guitar) - her more thoughtful playing and skillful leads brought another side to their music

GOAT (Drums) - an aspiring Nietzschean Over-Man, who pounded with equal ferocity both his drums and anyone who dared to pick a fight with him

Just as the band was starting to get notoriety outside their hometown SUB-CITY, SADOK was murdered in a manner very atypical to a metalhead: it appeared to be a job of professional hitmen. His best friend and novice guitarist IAN swore to find those responsible, in the process joining CYBERPRIEST himself.

It turned out that SADOK did not die for nothing: he had uncovered a twisted military mass mind control project involving an insane scientist DR.ULTRASHRED. Then, it also turned out he was not dead at all.

In the adventures that ensued IAN, PHANTASM and GOAT each took turns unraveling the military's many conspiracies, and finally revealed and brought to justice the mastermind behind them, GENERAL IRONFIST.

But all this was not without a price: as IAN and PHANTASM fell in love after their first adventure, CYBERPRIEST dissolved hatefully, and shortly afterwards SADOK died for real during a raid to a supposedly abandoned installation. GOAT went to live in the woods, and FAUSTUS became disillusioned and simply disappeared.

1. PROLOGUE

Three weeks after the events depicted in 'Metal Warrior 3', two figures stand at the gates of a deserted farm..

Led by a phone call consisting of ominous pig grunts & squeals, and the voice of the maniacal bassist/vocalist LORD OBSKURIUS, they have been asked to arrive at this place for reasons unknown.

They are IAN SMITH (artist name yet undecided) and JOAN ALDER (aka PHANTASM) who were, on several occasions in the past, drawn into violent conflict with a powerful military conspiracy.

With the conspiracy revealed and brought into justice, they should now be free to live together in peace, wielding their axes only in symbolic combat against the evils of the future world.

But things are about to get weird.. The Agents of Metal are about to enter the picture.

2. INITIATION

You are asked to assume the control of IAN on his journey to the unknown. As the game begins he is his usual self but an initiation and transformation into Agent form awaits..

3. CONTROLS

LEFT	- Move left
RIGHT	- Move right
UP	- Climb up
DOWN	- Crouch/climb down/Pick up
A + LEFT	- Jump left
A + RIGHT	- Jump right
B + Direction	- Attack
B + DOWN or L	- Use current item
B + UP or R	- Interact/Drop item
START	- Enter/exit game menu

There are 6 possible attack directions: left, right, up-left, up-right, down-left and down-right. However not all weapons can attack behind and diagonally.

3.2 SPECIAL MANEUVERS

To go up stairs instead of down, hold UP direction while moving.

To jump away from a ladder, press A + LEFT or A + RIGHT.

To perform a 'wall-flip' while jumping, press A and the direction opposite to your motion (LEFT or RIGHT) at the moment you hit the wall.

3.3 ITEM MANIPULATION

To pick up an item, crouch at it (press DOWN - you are near enough when the item's name is displayed). If you cannot pick up an item, you likely have reached your carrying capacity. See the STATUS SCREEN if this is the case.

To 'use' the currently selected item, press B + DOWN, or L button. Examples of items that can be used are first aid kits, armor rechargers, and the 'Agent gear' you receive soon after game start. Firearms are also reloaded this way.

To drop an unnecessary item, select it from the inventory and hold B + UP, or R button for 1 second. If the screen is already full of items you must go somewhere else. When a firearm is dropped, any ammunition held in it is moved to the ammunition reserve.

Note that when you move to another area, any dropped weapons, ammunition and supplies will disappear (stolen?) But if you drop them into a closet or onto a storage shelf (1 item max. per closet or shelf) they will remain.

4. INGAME STATUS DISPLAY

The bottom left part of the screen shows your score, current weapon/item selected and ammunition remaining.

For firearms, the ammunition display is split in two. Left side shows rounds in magazine and right side shows number of magazines remaining.

For melee weapons, INF (infinite) is displayed.

The top part of the screen shows your health (H) and armor power (A) meters.

Keep an eye on the health meter; when it falls to zero you are defeated and the game is over.

The armor power meter will fill only after receiving and activating your 'Agent gear'. The armor will take most of the damage as long as it has some power left.

To replenish health, use first aid kits. To replenish armor power, use armor rechargers. You will also automatically regain health up to 1/3 of the meter after taking near-fatal damage.

5. MENU SYSTEM

Press START to pause and access the game main menu.

The main menu is divided into 3 subscreens: GAME MENU, INVENTORY and STATUS.

To move between them, push LEFT/RIGHT. To move within a subscreen, push UP/DOWN. To activate a menu item, press the A button.

Press B or START to cancel a menu choice and return to the previous menu or continue the game.

5.1 GAME MENU

Before a game is started, only the GAME MENU is accessible.

NEW GAME

- Start a new game. You are presented with a difficulty level selection:
 - EASY - Less player damage & enemies, carrying capacity 25kg
 - NORMAL - Normal player damage & number of enemies, carrying capacity 20kg
 - HARD - More player damage & enemies, carrying capacity 15kg

LOAD GAME

- Load an existing game. 1-6 are manual save slots and A is the autosave, saved on each level change.

SAVE GAME

- Save the current game. Select a slot between 1-6. Note that the autosave is overwritten for each new game, so it is recommended to also save manually.

QUIT GAME

- End game and return to title screen. You are asked to confirm.

MUSIC Y/N

- Toggles whether music will be played. With music off you will hear more sound effects, such as footsteps.

SOUND Y/N

- Toggles whether sound effects will be played.

5.2 INVENTORY

Here you can select the current item (weapons, first aid kits etc.) in use. Press A, B or START to confirm & return to game.

5.3 STATUS SCREEN

The STATUS SCREEN displays your total game time, weight of items carried, and three status bars:

VIT - Vitality
STR - Strength
ARMOR - Armorsystem class

With higher vitality, the health bar will deplete slower from damage.

Higher strength increases your carrying capacity, so that more weapons and supplies can be carried at a time. Your melee attacks and thrown weapons also become more powerful.

A higher armorsystem class means that the armor can stop more damage before requiring to be recharged.

Vitality & strength upgrades can be found in enemy installations. Use Surgical Units to install these. Armor upgrades can also be found; these can be installed simply by selecting from the inventory and using (B + DOWN, or L button).

6. INTERACTION

There are several ways to interact with the game world. All of them are activated by pressing B + UP, or R button (the 'interact' control).

6.1 CONVERSATION

You need to stand near and face the person you wish to talk to, and hold the 'interact' control for about 1/4 seconds.

If no conversation begins, this means simply that there's nothing important to say at the moment - you might want to come back later. Also, if the person is engaged in combat, you must wait.

Press A, B, L or R to proceed to the next dialogue text display.

At times you are able to choose your reply from multiple choices; this is indicated by arrows in the message window and a question mark above your character's head. Press UP/DOWN to see the choices and A button to select.

Sometimes conversations are also triggered automatically when you are near a person.

6.2 GAME WORLD OBJECTS

When you're standing at an object that can be interacted with, an arrow will flash at your character's feet.

6.2.1 DOORS, SWITCHES, CLOSETS

To enter a door, stand in front of it and hold the 'interact' control for

about 1/4 seconds. Some doors need to be opened or unlocked first by using a nearby switch or keycard lock.

To operate a switch or lock, you need to stand in front of it. Any item required will be inserted automatically.

Closets might contain ammunition, weapons or other useful items.

6.2.2 COMPUTER TERMINALS

The contents of a computer terminal screen are displayed either in the main game screen or in the message window. Sometimes you are also be presented with a control interface similar to the game menu.

6.2.3 RECHARGERS AND SURGICAL UNITS

These fixed units can be used to regain lost armor power or health. The surgical unit presents you with a menu interface:

- HEAL - Restore all health
- VIT - Install vitality upgrade
- STR - Install strength upgrade
- EXIT - Return to game

6.2.4 ELEVATORS

To go up on an elevator, interact while standing on its left half. To go down, interact while standing on the right half. An elevator call button can usually be found next to an elevator shaft.

7. THE MAP SCREEN

When you exit an area you are presented with a map screen to choose your next destination. Use UP/DOWN/LEFT/RIGHT to move and A button to select.

New locations are added to the map as you learn of their existence. Note that you need to locate and use the ground level exit of each enemy installation before you can return to it simply via the map screen.

8. WEAPONS & AMMUNITION

There are 21 different kinds of weapons in the game, and of course your trusty fists to fall back upon.

Note that by picking up every weapon you encounter you will likely reach your

carrying capacity quickly.

Common ammunition types and uses:

9mm	- Pistols, Submachine gun
.44	- .44 Magnum pistol
5.56	- Automatic rifles
7.62	- Sniper rifle
12 gauge	- Shotguns
Darts	- Dart gun
Batteries	- Electronic stun gun

Any experimental weapons that you encounter might require their own kinds of ammunition.

The weapons with non-lethal effect are:

- Fists
- Baton
- Dart gun
- Electronic stun gun

Some weapons (such as the dart gun) have a prolonged damage effect, that the armor does not protect against. You will notice this when the health bar starts to decrease even if you have armor left, and your character flashes. Using a first aid kit stops this.

9. AGENT HINTS & TACTICS

Enemies detect you by sight and sound. When you crouch-walk (sneak), they will not hear you.

Enemies might be expecting you when there has been gunfire or other loud noises just before. It might be beneficial to let things calm down before proceeding.

Reloading in the middle of combat can prove fatal. Therefore it is often wise to ensure beforehand (use B + DOWN, or L button to reload) that you have a fresh magazine.

A damage bonus is added to surprise attacks from behind (for example, a guard might go down with one blow of the Baton).

An Agent might not necessarily have to kill; double points are awarded for non-lethal defeat of an enemy.

Good luck on your adventure!

10. CREDITS & COPYRIGHT

Agent concept:

LIONEL GENDRE & LASSE RNI

Programming, graphics, sound:

LASSE RNI

Music:

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SULTAN

Ending quotes:

AGENT METAL

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11. THANKS FOR AGENT EVIDENCE

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many more

Primary Agent inspiration:

AGENT STEEL (the band)

DEUS EX (the game)

Special thanks to all betatesters, without whom many infernal bugs would
have remained.

Greetings to all C64 users, sceners, artists & webmasters etc. and to everyone
in the GBA homebrew community. You rule the world!

12. CONTACT INFO

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Agent Metal:

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13. GBA VERSION HISTORY

V1.0

- Original release, based on C64 version 1.1

V1.1

- Added autosave on level change
- Added automatic health regain up to 1/3 health after taking near-fatal damage
- Fixed actor lower part getting displayed only partially when overlapping the bottom border
- Fixed actor animation while reloading the flamethrower & moving

V1.2

- When autosaving, duration of continuous damage is reduced if it would be fatal

V1.3

- Gameplay balance adjustments
- Mutant enemy replaced with the classic variant from MW1-3