

TANKS.

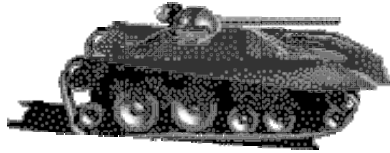
Tactical Armoured Nuclear Kombat Stations

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Credits

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Instructions

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Loading instructions

Before playing TANKS, you must use the !SysMerge application on disc 1 to update your !System directory. If you do not know how to do this, read the !SysMerge Help file (Click MENU over the !SysMerge icon, and select Help from the **App** submenu). You do not need to do this if your computer has RISC OS 3.6 or greater fitted.

Loading from floppy

Insert TANKS disc 1 into your floppy drive, and click on its icon bar icon. Double click the !TANKS application in the file window that appears. When prompted, remove disc 1 and insert disc 2. After a short time, you will be prompted to insert disc 1 again. You should not remove disc 1 from the drive whilst playing the game.

TANKS is not copy protected, and we recommend that you make backups of the original discs, and play the game from the backup discs.

Installing to hard disc.

Insert TANKS disc 1 into your floppy drive, and click on its icon bar icon. Use the !SysMerge on disc 1 to update your !System directory.

Next, drag the !Tanks icon from the floppy disc directory display to the required directory on your hard drive. When the !Tanks application has been copied to your hard drive, dismount and remove disc 1, and insert disc 2. On disc 2 here is another !Tanks application. Drag this to the same directory on your hard drive.

When this has been copied, TANKS is installed, and ready to play. You will not need the original floppy discs to play the game, so keep them safe in case you need to reinstall TANKS.

TANKS is a multi player game of mayhem and destruction. Each player controls a TANKS (Tactical Armoured Nuclear Kombat Station), and must attempt to destroy the TANKS belonging to the other players.

The game is played in rounds, and before each round, each player has the chance to go shopping, to buy extra equipment for his tank.

Then the tanks are dropped into an arena from which the only escape is victory. Players who have their tanks destroyed get a free replacement for the next round. The winner is the last surviving tank (or team of tanks), and they get a substantial cash bonus.

The tanks in the game can be either human or computer controlled, and there are a selection of computer brains to choose from. These range from the **moron**, which is ideal for beginners to play against, to the deadly **cyborg** which is a match for even the most experienced humans.

When TANKS has loaded, it will install its icon onto the icon bar. Clicking MENU over this will show the **Main Menu**. Most of these options should be self explanatory.

Info leads to a standard program information window.

The **Save game** entry leads to a standard RISCOS save box, allowing you to save your game and resume it later. From the **Setup** submenu you can configure the game. This is explained below.

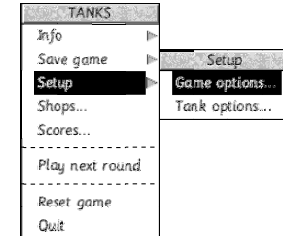
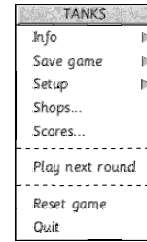
Shops... opens the **Shop window**. This is explained in more detail later.

Scores... shows the **Scores window**.

Play next round sends the players into the next arena.

Reset game will return TANKS to the default setup.

Quit will quit from TANKS.



From the Main Menu, open the **Setup** submenu, and select the **Game options...** entry.

This will open the **Game options** window, shown on the next page. From here you can change the settings for the game you are about to play. You can also change the settings during a game, for example another person might want to join in.

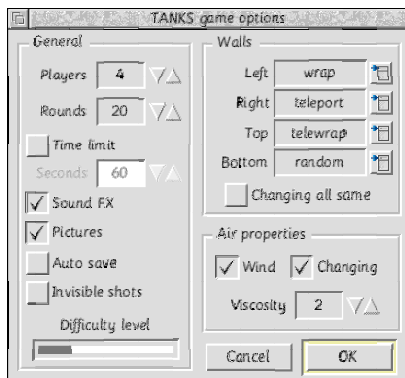
The first set of options is grouped under the heading 'General'. These are:

Players: Number of players in the game. This includes human and computer players.

Rounds: How many rounds to play.

Time limit: Can be on or off. If on, each player gets a limited time to make each of his turns. This time can be set in the **Seconds** icon.

Game Setup



Sound FX: Turns the sound effects on or off.

Pictures: This turns the in-game background screens on or off. You might want to turn them off if you are playing TANKS from a floppy drive, to speed things up. If this icon is faded, then your machine does not have enough memory to display the pictures.

Auto save: If on, your game will be saved before each round is played. Note that if you have not specified where to save the game to, it will be saved to your current directory.

Invisible shots: With this turned on, the weapons fired by the TANKS will not be visible on the screen, until they hit something. This option can lead to some tense moments.

Difficulty level: This slider has five positions, to set the difficulty level of the game. Left is easiest, right is hardest. Turning the difficulty up means life gets harder for the human players in the game.

Game Setup

Next comes the **Walls** section.

Each playing arena that the TANKS battle in is surrounded by four walls. These walls can have various effects on the missiles fired by the TANKS. For each wall, the possible options are:

None: There is no wall, and the missiles keeps on going. Only the top wall can be this type. These walls are grey in colour.

Solid: Causes missiles to explode on contact. These walls are green

Sponge: Missiles bounce off very slowly. Dark blue.

Bounce: Missiles bounce normally. Mid-blue.

Spring: Missiles bounce with extra velocity. Light blue.

Mirror: Reflects missiles back the way they came. Cyan.

Wrap: Causes missiles to wrap round to the opposite side of the arena. Purple.

Teleport: Teleports missiles to a random point on the same wall. Yellow.

Telewrap: Teleports missiles to a random point on the opposite wall. Orange.

Random: One of the above happens at random. Red.

Changing: The type of this wall is chosen from the above list at the start of each round. If the **Changing all same** option is on, then all changing walls will be the same type.

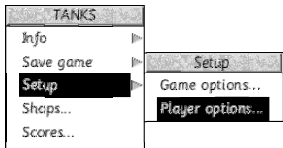
The final set of options is **Air properties**:

Wind: If on, then missiles will be blown sideways by the wind.

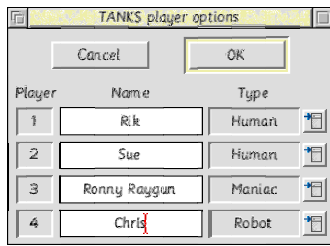
Changing: If on, then the wind will change randomly after each turn.

Viscosity: This is the air resistance that the missiles encounter. Higher values will make missiles slow down more, and also will reduce the accuracy of some of the computer controlled players.

When you have set the options to your satisfaction, click the OK button. Do not be daunted by the wide range of options available, for your first game, all you need to change is the number of players in the game. Now proceed to the next page to set the player options. Note that when you set these options before a game has started, the TANKS equipment and money are reset to the default amounts.



From the **Main Menu**, open the **Setup** submenu, and select the **Player options...** entry. This will open the player options window, shown below.



In this window, you can enter a name for each player, and set whether they are human or computer controlled.

There are 5 types of computer player, ranging from the very stupid (**Moron**) to the very dangerous (**Cyborg**). If you set a player to be **Unknown**, it will choose a random personality each round. Click **OK** when you have finished setting up the players.

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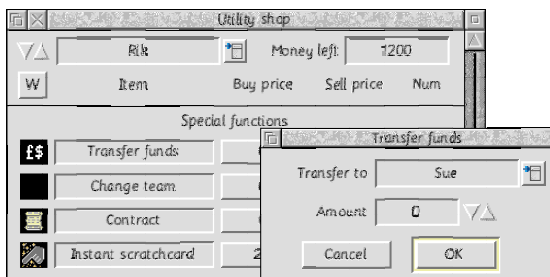
Shopping

If you wish to buy or sell a large number of the same item, clicking MENU over that item's **buy** or **sell** button will produce a menu that allows you to buy or sell in bulk.

What the various weapons and equipment do is explained later. However, there is a special section at the bottom of the **Utility Shop**, that is not for buying and selling equipment.



The first of these special buttons allows you to give money to another player. Click on the **buy** button and a small window will pop up. In this window select who you wish to give the money to, and how much, then click **OK**.



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In order to carry on dealing out massive destruction, players will find they need to regularly stock up on the latest military hardware. To do this, open the **Shop Window** by selecting the **Shops...** entry from the main menu. There are 2 shop windows, one for **Weapons**, and one for **Utilities**. Here is a small section of the **Weapon Shop** window, the **Utility Shop** looks very similar:



You can scroll or resize the window. The section at the top of the window does not scroll, and displays details of the player who is currently shopping. To change this, select a new player from the pop up menu, or click the arrows. To the right of the player's name is displayed how much money he or she has left. Clicking the square button underneath the player's name switches to the other shop window.

Each row of icons in the shop shows a different item that is for sale. At the left is the item's icon, which is used to identify it during the game. Next is its name, then two buttons. The first shows the cost of this item, and if you click this button you will buy one. The second shows the trade in value of this item, and if you have any, you can sell one back to the shop by clicking this button. The final icon in the row shows how many of this item you currently have.

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Shopping

The next button allows you to change which **team** you belong to. There are four teams, **Red**, **Blue**, **Yellow** and **Green**. When you click on the **buy** button, the icon on the left will show a small flag of your team's colour. You can change team at any time during the game. You can belong to no team, in which case no flag is shown.

Next is the **Contract** option. This allows you to 'put out a contract' on another player. The first player to kill this victim will be paid the amount of money you put into the contract. The contract is set up with a pop up window in the same way as the **transfer funds** option works.

Finally is the **Instant Scratchcard**. Yes, lottery fever affects TANKS as well. Each scratchcard costs 25 credits, and the prizes you could win are taken from the entire range of weapons in the game. However, remember that you could also lose!

When all the human players have bought what they want from the shops, it's time to play the next round.

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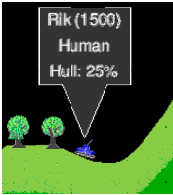
(shown sideways)

From the main menu, select the **Play next round** entry, then click the **Start** button in the window that appears. This will send the players into the playing arena for the next round of combat.

First you will be shown an information screen, consisting of a list of the players in the game, whether a contract has been taken out on any of them, and their combat rating. The colour of a player's entry in this list shows what team he is on. Click **SELECT** or press the spacebar to enter the game.

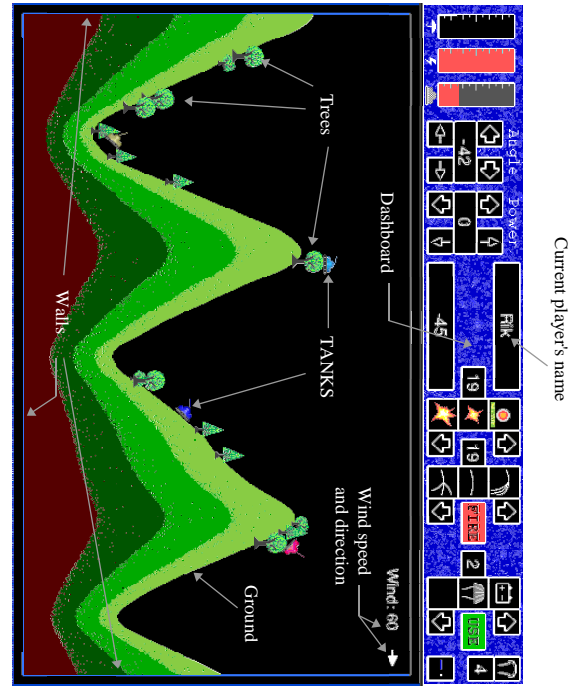
The arena will be shown, and the **TANKS** are dropped into it. If there are computer players in your game, one or more of them may get to have a turn before you do. When a human player is due to have a turn, a mouse pointer appears, and the player's name will be shown at the top of the screen.

The arena will look something like the picture on the next page. To see which of the **TANKS** is yours, click on your name at the top of the screen, or press the **?** key. To find out about the other **TANKS**, click the mouse over them. This shows an information box like this:



The figure in brackets is the amount of contract on this player. The second row shows what type of player this is, and the third row shows how much hull they have left. All **TANKS** start the game with 25% hull, unless they have used armour plating to increase this. If the **TANKS** have a shield or deflector, the strength of this is shown below the hull figure.

Once you have selected your victim, use the controls on the dashboard to aim a weapon at him (or her) and then fire! It's that simple. Of course, there are many different ways to achieve the destruction of the other **TANKS**, and also to help prevent your own destruction.



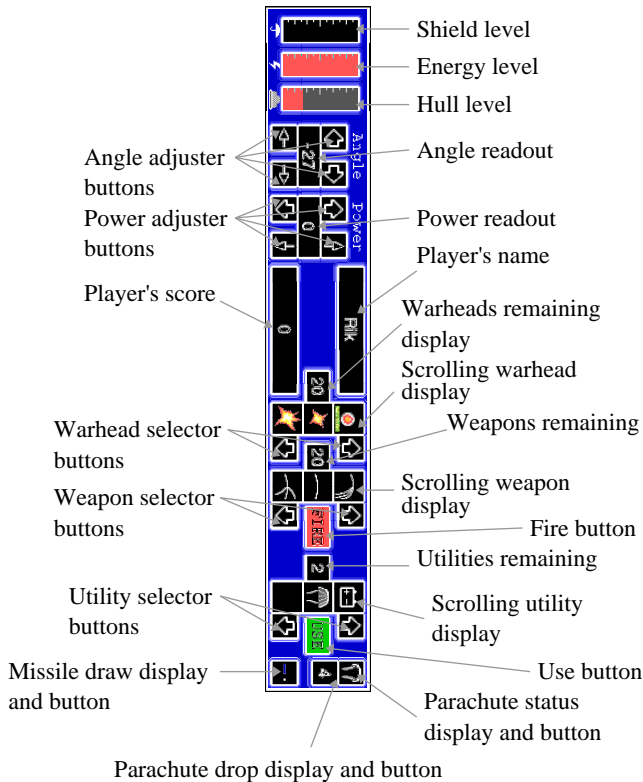
The dashboard is explained in more detail on the next page.

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The dashboard

(shown sideways)



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Playing the game

The three bars on the left of the dashboard show the status of your **TANKS**. The leftmost bar shows the energy remaining in your shield, if you have one. The next bar shows the **energy** remaining in your **TANKS** central power system. The amount of energy you have determines how high you can set your **power**, and thus how fast you can fire **missiles**. The final bar shows your current **hull** strength. When a **TANKS** hull reaches zero, it explodes. The grey area on the hull display shows the maximum possible hull you can have, which can be boosted by buying **armour plating**.

The next section shows the **angle** that your **TANKS** barrel is pointing, and has some buttons that you can use to alter this angle. The buttons with the large arrows change the angle in large steps, and the small arrows change it in small steps. If you use the middle mouse button, the buttons will not auto repeat.

The power display shows the current power setting. When you fire a missile, the higher the power setting, the faster the missile goes. Only missile weapons use the power setting, other weapons work in different ways.

In the centre of the dashboard are two displays showing the player's name and his or her current score. If you click on the name, the player's **TANKS** will be highlighted in the arena below.

The **warhead selector** section is next. This has a central bar that scrolls, two buttons with arrows on and a numerical display. By clicking the buttons, you can scroll through your available warheads. The number to the left is how many of that item you have left. The central item in the scrolling display is the currently selected one, which will be used with the next weapon fired.

Adjacent to the warhead selector is the **weapon selector**, and these are used together most of the time. Weapons are selected in the same way as warheads. The warhead display will change as different weapons are selected to show warheads that fit that type of weapon.

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To fire a weapon, select the weapon, then selected the warhead you wish you use with that weapon. Then double click the red FIRE button.

Some weapons do not use warheads, so the warhead display would be empty when one of these is selected in the weapon display. Example - **Laser**.

The last major section on the dashboard is the **utility selector**. This operates in exactly the same way as the other two selectors. To use a utility, selected it then double click the green USE button.

The **parachute status button** shows whether you have your parachutes enabled. If you do, then the number in the **parachute drop button** shows how far your TANKS must fall before the parachute opens. By clicking this button, you can change the value.

TANKS take hull damage from falling, but it is often not worth the cost of a parachute to save yourself from a tiny amount of damage from a short fall.

The last button determines whether the missiles you fire will leave a trail, or indeed be visible at all. Click it to cycle through the choices. Changing this does not change the effect of the weapons, just their display on the screen. If you ticked the **Invisible shots** button in the game options window, all players will start the game with their weapons set to invisible.




Weapons - Missiles

Missiles come in several different types. The cheapest is the **Single**, which carries a single warhead. Other missiles carry more than one warhead, and are more expensive.

When a missile is fired, it travels in the direction your barrel was pointing, at a speed determined by your current power setting. Gravity and air resistance affect it, and so it will sooner or later fall back down to earth, whereupon whatever warhead it is carrying will be triggered.

If it is a multiple warhead missile, when it reaches the apex (highest point) of its flight, it will split into several missiles, each with one warhead.

The different types of missiles are:

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|------------------|
| 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 | warheads |
|  | | | | No split |
| |  | | | Horizontal split |
| | |  | | Vertical split |

Each turn, a player can use **utilities** and fire **weapons**. As many utilities as the player has can be used. Only a certain number of weapons can be fired by a player in each turn. When the player has fired their weapons, their turn ends.

If you want to end a round quickly, perhaps because all the human players have been destroyed, press the **control** and **Q** keys together. This will quickly find a winner for the current round.

There are two basic types of weapon. **Missiles** and **Direct Fire**. Only one missile can be fired in a player' turn. When a missile is fired, it is used up, so if you want to fire lots of them, you have to buy lots.

Missiles must be fitted with a **warhead**, and the warhead is also used up when fired. Some missiles can carry more than one warhead, and the appropriate number of warheads will be used up. If you do not have enough warheads for the missile you fire, it will still fire, but with reduced effect.

On the other hand, **direct fire** weapons are not used up when you fire them. However they need **ammunition**, which is used up when fired. The ammunition is displayed for the currently selected direct fire weapon in the warhead selector. So, for example, if you had a machine gun selected in the weapon selector, the warhead selector would allow you to selected from any bullets you had.

Weapons - Warheads

There are many different types of warheads to equip your missiles with. Most of them come in a range of sizes, with the bigger ones doing more damage and costing more money to buy. Each type of missile has a limit as to the size of warhead it can carry, for example you cannot put **Mega Nukes** onto a **Vertical-7** missile. The warhead selector will only show the warheads appropriate for the currently selected missile, so you do not have to worry about this too much.

Here is a brief description of the types available:

Explosive   

Explosive warheads simply explode when they hit something. There are three sizes, the largest can destroy standard TANKS in a single hit.

Nukes    

Nuclear warheads provide extra destructive power and a greater blast radius compared to conventional explosives. There are four sizes, the largest can wipe out most of the players in the game with a lucky shot.

Rocks  

Strange as it may seem, you can put large rocks on the end of your missiles. These do minimal damage to TANKS, but cause substantial damage to Bouncer and Absorber shields. They are also cheap, so can be used for aiming shots.

Rollers



Rollers do just that. When the missile hits the ground, a ball of fire is released that rolls downhill until it hits something, then it explodes. These balls of fire are not stopped by any kind of shield. There are three different sizes to suit any customer's needs.

Mole mortars



A speciality weapon for those awkward occasions, mole mortars start tunnelling when they hit the ground. The tunnelling warhead will bounce off any type of wall, and explodes when it emerges from the ground, or hits a TANKS. Good against shielded TANKS as it can burrow under the shield. The large size has a larger blast and does more damage.

Earth bombs



More of an inconvenience than a weapon, earth bombs leave a huge mound of earth where they land, but do no actual damage. Bury your enemies, amuse your friends!

Diggers



The answer to earth bombs, digger warheads also do no damage, but do make a large hole in any earth they hit. These could be used to damage someone by making them fall into the hole, if the victim had no parachutes.

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Weapons - Direct Fire

Direct fire weapons differ from missiles in several ways. Firstly, they are not affected by wind, air resistance or gravity, so travel in a straight line. Secondly, they can be fired more than once during a turn. How often depends on the weapon in question. Also, direct fire weapons may be used any number of times in the whole game, however you have to buy ammunition for each shot. You can change your aim between shots, perhaps destroying two or more TANKS in one turn!

Direct fire weapons are not affected in the same way as missiles by the various types of arena walls. **Shotgun** and **machine gun** shots are absorbed by the walls, whereas **lasers** bounce off walls.

Shotgun



Shotgun ammunition



The cheapest of the direct fire weapons is the **shotgun**. It is a double barrelled shotgun, and so can fire two shots a turn. At close range it can deal a large amount of damage to unshielded TANKS, but its range is limited. Two types of ammo are available, offering competitive price to damage ratios.

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Electro drains



Another weapon that does not damage TANKS, instead it drains their energy banks, leaving them unable to fire weapons. The large size has an increased blast radius and drains more energy.

Stun bomb



The stun bomb does no damage to TANKS, but incapacitates their crews for a short length of time. This can result in the target player missing one or more turns. If used on computer controlled TANKS, it also reduces their intelligence, making them do embarrassingly stupid things. There is only one size of stun bomb.

Funky bombs



Possibly the most lethal (and amusing) weapon ever produced, the Funky Bomb sprays high explosive warheads in all directions when it impacts. The larger version, the Get Down, has even more extra large warheads.

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Weapons - Direct Fire

Machine gun



Machine gun ammo



The **machine gun** has rapid fire capability, and takes three different types of ammunition, offering a range of destructive possibilities. **explosive** and **armour piercing** bullets are especially good against TANKS with shields. To fire the machine gun, when you double click the FIRE button, hold the second click and the weapon will keep firing until all its shots for that turn are used. Alternatively, you can stop firing at any point to change your aim or select different ammunition. You may find that using the space bar to fire is easier (see page 29).

Machine guns can fire a total of 32 shots per turn.

Laser



The most powerful direct fire weapons is the **laser**. This needs no ammunition, and draws its power directly from the TANKS' energy banks. Lasers can fire twice per turn.

To fire the laser, double click the FIRE button, and hold the second click. You will see the charge level increasing on your energy display. When the charge reaches the desired level, release the mouse button, and the laser will fire. You may find it easier to use the space bar for this. The more charge you put into a laser shot, the further the beam will travel, and the more damage it will do. Firing the laser drains your energy banks, so make sure you stock up on **batteries**.

You can upgrade your laser, by buying the **laser upgrade** item from the weapons shop. Each upgrade you buy will increase the efficiency of the laser, so it will do more damage for the same energy input.

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There is a range of **utilities** available to buy for the TANKS. In general, you can use any number of these items in a turn, but there might be a situation where using one ends your turn. For example you could use a **transporter** to make your TANKS drop a long distance, destroying it.

To use a utility, select it using the **utility selector** on the dashboard, and then double click the USE button (see page 29 for keyboard alternatives).

Below is a description of what the various utilities do.

Parachute



These allow TANKS to float gracefully down to earth if the ground underneath them is destroyed, presumably due to enemy weapons fire. One parachute is used up for each fall.

The USE button has no effect for parachutes. If you have parachutes, but you don't want to use them, you can click the **parachute status button** (see dashboard diagram) to turn them on or off. By clicking the **parachute drop button** you can set the distance that the TANKS must fall before a parachute is used. Taking a small amount of damage from a short drop allows you to save your parachutes for the big drops that would otherwise kill you.

Blasting charge



When activated, this fires an explosive charge underneath your TANKS, making a large hole which the TANKS then falls in to. This can be useful for hiding from enemy fire, especially if you also have a deflector. Blasting charges come with a free parachute.

Utilities

Direct aiming



This computes firing solutions for direct fire weapons. There is only one version, which is normally very reliable, as aiming a direct fire weapon is much more predictable than a missile weapon. Use this is exactly the same way as normal Aiming / Targeting.

Short teleport



Long teleport



These utilities allow you to move your TANKS. To do this, use the utility, then click the mouse pointer on the required destination. Try to avoid destinations high above the ground unless you have a parachute. You will notice that the mouse pointer is restricted to the range of the teleport device, and also that you cannot teleport to under the ground or directly onto other TANKS.

Repair kit



Super repair



If your TANKS has been damaged in the heat of battle, use a **repair kit** to restore some of your lost hull. Alternatively, the much more expensive **super repair** will restore your hull to its full amount!

Activator



Activators allow you to use other utilities before the round begins. So, for example, you could raise a **shield** before any other TANKS get a chance to fire at you. You do not use activators directly, but if you have any, you will get a chance to use other utilities at the start of each round, before any TANKS are allowed to fire. Each utility used in this way uses up one activator.

Battery



Using a battery charges up your TANKS energy banks by about 10%. You can also use batteries to boost your shield, if you have one. If you have a shield, you will see a small arrow above the energy bar on the dashboard. Clicking on the energy bar moves this arrow to the shield bar, and back again. Whichever system this arrow points to is the one that will be charged when you use a battery.

Tracer



When used, a tracer will fire along the same path that a **single missile** would take if it was fired with your current angle and power. This allows you to try out a shot before you fire. Tracers do not damage anything they hit.

Aiming



Targeting



These two items both use sophisticated computer technology to compute a firing solution. When you use the item, you then click the mouse pointer over the TANKS you wish to target, and your angle and power are automatically set to the values needed for a hit.

Aiming is the cheaper of the two, but is not as accurate. It can be adversely affected by high winds and other factors.

Targeting is more expensive, but is 99% reliable.

Both of these items only compute firing solutions for missile weapons.

Utilities

Deflector



A powerful magnetic field that can protect TANKS from incoming missiles. Missiles that approach will be repelled upwards. This drains the deflector's energy, but it can be recharged with batteries. Deflectors do not protect TANKS from damage directly, so if a missile gets through, you will be in trouble. Deflectors are most effective against missile coming from above.

Shield



Shields protect TANKS from damage in two ways. First, any weapon fired at you will hit the shield, thus exploding further way from the TANKS. Secondly, the shield absorbs most of the damage from the weapon. However, some damage does penetrate the shield, and the shield loses energy as it is damaged. You can use batteries to charge the shield again.

Bouncer



Bouncers absorb damage in the same way as normal shields, but most weapons don't get chance to damage them, as they simply bounce off. This can be very amusing if the weapon bounces back to the person who fired it.

If you are attacking TANKS with bouncers activated, try firing large weapons into the ground near them, as the blast from the weapon will damage TANKS caught in it. Nukes are ideal for this.

Absorber



Absorbers are the ultimate in shield technology, these not only protect TANKS from blast damage, but any missile weapon hitting the absorber is added to the TANKS own inventory! They also charge your energy banks if hit by a laser. However, the absorber's own energy is severely depleted by being hit.

Armour plating



Heavy Armour



Armour plating can be used to increase your TANKS hull strength. It comes in two sizes, the larger one is better value for money. When used, your hull will increase, and so will your maximum hull, as shown by the grey bar on the hull display. This increase is permanent, not just for the current round. However, your maximum hull rating is reduced by damage, although it can never drop below 25% (the starting value). All TANKS begin each round with their hull at their current maximum value.

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Low memory machines

If your computer only has 2 megabytes of RAM, TANKS may not be able to load its full range of features. However these features are purely aesthetic, and this will not affect the gameplay at all.

If TANKS gives an error when loading, telling you there is not enough memory, try resetting your computer with the CONTROL and SHIFT keys held down. This will ensure that no other programs are loaded. You should check that the **Ramdisc**, **System Sprites**, **Font Cache** and **Module Area** bars on the **Task Manager** display are set as low as they can be. Also change the desktop screen mode to either 15 (for low resolution monitors) or 28 (for high resolution monitors).

Make sure your !System directory has been seen, then run TANKS. If you are loading TANKS from the floppy discs, then the !System supplied on disc 1 will suffice.

If you have a high resolution monitor, capable of 640x480 or more, TANKS will automatically run with high resolution graphics. This requires more memory, and on a 2 megabyte machine you will not get the full range of sound effects and background pictures.

If you wish, you can force the game into low resolution mode, thus making room for the sounds and pictures. To do this, hold down the ALT key while TANKS is loading. You should change the desktop screen mode to 15 before doing this, to release any free memory in the screen area. This may also be desirable for users of computers with ARM2 processors, as the game will run more smoothly in low resolution mode on these slower machines.

Computers with 4 megabytes or more should have no problems running TANKS, as long as no other applications are taking up the free memory. To use all its features in a high resolution screen mode, TANKS requires approximately 2000k to be free when it loads, plus another 300k of screen memory. You will find that TANKS will run more smoothly in a high res mode if you have a small **Font Cache** set up (8k will do).

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In addition to using the buttons on the dashboard to control the TANKS, there are keyboard alternatives. Also there are a few functions that can only be activated from the keyboard.

| Key | Function |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| left arrow | move barrel left |
| right arrow | move barrel right |
| up arrow | increase power |
| down arrow | decrease power |
| SHIFT with arrow key | faster |
| CTRL with arrow key | single step |
| + / - (keypad) | scroll weapon selector |
| SHIFT + / - (keypad) | scroll warhead selector |
| SPACE | fire weapon |
| + / - (main keyboard) | scroll utility selector |
| BACKSPACE | use utility |
| C | toggle battery charge |
| D | toggle weapon draw |
| PAGE UP / DOWN | inc / dec parachute drop |
| P | toggle parachute on / off |
| / | show current player |
| ESCAPE | skip a turn |
| CTRL-ESCAPE | commit suicide |
| CTRL-Q | quick kill |
| CTRL-F12 | quit to desktop |

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