

PC CD-ROM

BLITZKRIEG

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INTRODUCTION & MULTIPLAYER



INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the 1930's, Germany was politically unstable. After losing WWI, the country had become a democracy (Weimar Republic), but not for long: the world economic crisis of 1929 contributed to its quick demise. Adolf Hitler's National-Socialist movement, formerly insignificant, grew into the biggest political party during the crisis. In January, 1933 Hitler became chancellor of the Reich. He rose to power on the wave of nationalism caused by the people's discontent with the outcome of WWI. After 1934, Germany, became a cruel dictatorship. The Hitler regime's popularity was based on economic boom fuelled by the end of the world crisis and by emerging of powerful modern armaments industry sponsored by the government. In 1935, Germany began to re-build its regular army - Wehrmacht. Hitler's far-reaching plans included domination of the whole of Europe, and in a more distant future - establishing a new world order headed by Germany and its allies (Italy and Japan), eventually and turning Germany into the center of a worldwide colonial empire. The first steps along this road included German-Italian intervention in Spain in 1936-39, Anschluss of Austria in 1938 and the capture of Czechoslovakia at the beginning of 1939; the latter took place under a tacit agreement of the world powers who divided spheres of influence in Europe by the Munich agreement of 1938.

On September 1, 1939 Germany attacked Poland; this served as pretext for the allied countries - Great Britain and France, members of anti-Hitler coalition - to declare war on Germany. It was the beginning of WWII. Despite courageous resistance of the Polish troops, including the 20 days-long defense of Warsaw, the German army which had significant superiority in manpower and weapons, occupied Poland within a month. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union (which signed a neutrality treaty with Germany) sent troops to take control of Western Byelorussia, Western Ukraine and the Baltic states. Being aware that future war was inevitable, the Soviet government headed by Stalin began modernization of the country's military industry and took steps to re-equip the Red Army. The need for modernization of the armed forces became particularly apparent after the Soviet-Japanese military campaign in the Far East (May - September, 1939). That conflict, as well as the successful Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40, led to the change of the Red Army's tactics, increasing the importance of armored forces and aviation; new weapons and military vehicle designs had been combat-tested during these campaigns. Finally, the Red Army's success postponed the Soviet Union's entering WWII and prevented war at the USSR's Far Eastern borders. In 1940 Germany started active combat operations in Europe, capturing Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, Yugoslavia and Greece. In August 1940, the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) began massive air raids on Great Britain, causing serious damage to British towns and cities; however, the resistance put up by British Air Force made a German landing operation in Britain. In the spring of 1941

Germany sent expeditionary corps to Northern Africa to help Italian troops hold Libya and capture Egypt.

In the summer of 1940, Hitler decided on the direction of Wehrmacht's next main strike - the Soviet Union. According to the "Barbarossa Plan" developed in July-December of 1940, Soviet Russia was to be defeated quickly by splitting the Russian army's front into several sections (its main forces were concentrated in the western part of the country). Powerful mobile groups of German troops were to break deep into the Russian defenses, surround Russian forces and destroy them. The immediate objective was to reach the Pskov - Smolensk - Kiev line, then advance to Leningrad, Moscow and Donbass and capture them. Before the beginning of winter, German troops were supposed to reach the Archangelsk - Volga - Astrakhan line and occupy most of the European territory of the Soviet Union. By June, 1941 three German army groups (181 divisions) were deployed along the Soviet borders from the Barents Sea to the Black Sea; they were supported by three Air Forces. The objective was to advance on Leningrad, Moscow and Kiev. These forces amounted to 5.5 million troops, 3,712 tanks, 47,260 cannons and 4,950 aircraft. In the morning of June 22, after artillery preparation and massive bomb strikes, the German troops crossed the USSR border and started to advance deep into the country's territory. The Great Patriotic war began...

The "Barbarossa Plan" was based on the "lightning war" (Blitzkrieg) theory developed by German military as early as WWI; the goal was to achieve victory as quickly as possible, in a few days or months. Combat operations in Europe conducted until the summer of 1941, and the beginning of the campaign on the Eastern front against the USSR seemed to confirm that Hitler's reckoning was correct. However, soon it became clear that hopes of a lightning-quick victory were not going to come true. Unsuccessful attempts to capture Moscow at the beginning of the winter of 1941, and the defeat of German troops under Moscow signified the failure of the Barbarossa plan. A long, bloody positional war was to follow, and German military forces and industry could not wage such a war. Thanks to unparalleled efforts and outstanding heroism of the Soviet troops and the skills of high military command, the USSR, supported by members of anti-Hitler coalition fighting on the Western front, primarily Great Britain and the USA, inflicted a crushing defeat on Germany. By the end of April 1945, the entire German territory was captured, and Hitler's regime, which didn't stop fighting until the very last moment, came to its end. On May 8, 1945, the act of unconditional German surrender was signed. WWII lasted for five and a half years, ravaged much of European territory and took about 50 million lives.

The game

Blitzkrieg is a military strategy game based on WWII events. The game includes three campaigns, one for each side fighting the war: Germany, the Soviet Union and anti-Hitler coalition countries (the Allies). Each campaign is divided into a number of chapters. German campaign includes operations conducted by German forces at the initial stage of the war: invasion into Poland in 1939, operations against Western European countries (invasion into Normandy in 1940, operations in Northern Africa) and the war in the East against the Soviet Union according to Barbarossa plan: invasion in the summer of 1941, Moscow offense in the autumn of 1941 and battles under Kharkov in 1942 and 1943. The Soviet campaign begins with the Soviet-Finnish war of 1940 and includes all main battles against Germany: warding off the Leningrad offensive undertaken according to Barbarossa plan, the battle under Moscow in the winter of 1941, the Stalingrad battle of 1942, the Kursk arc operation of 1943, liberation of Western Ukraine and Moldavia in 1944 and the battle for Berlin in the spring of 1945. The Allied campaign includes the battle for France in 1940, Northern African campaigns in Libya in 1940 and Tunisia in 1942, operation in Norway, operation in Italy in 1943, the Allied landing in Normandy in 1944 and liberation of Western European countries at the end of 1944 - beginning of 1945.

The game's events unveil from one chapter to another in historical sequence. Each chapter includes one initial and one main mission; these must be completed. After that, you may complete several supplementary (optional) missions and move on to the next chapter at any time. Area maps and positions of troops in main missions are very close to real historical events. In other missions, area maps and locations of all objects are generated randomly, which makes the gameplay less predictable and more engaging; missions of three difficulty levels are available.

You will play the role of commander of a small military formation; your task is to accomplish all missions successfully and ultimately complete all campaign chapters. Your formation includes various forces - artillery, armored troops, infantry, support and supplies units; you'll be able to call for air support. Combat operations take place on a square area map corresponding to real scaled down areas ranging from about 10x10 to 50x50 km. At the beginning of each mission you'll be given specific objective(s). Usually these will include attacking enemy positions, capturing strategic objects (towns, bridges and railway stations), defeating enemy forces and capturing bases; defensive operations' objectives include holding fortified positions under strikes by superior enemy forces. You'll be able to give individual orders to any combat unit under your command, or put several combat units together into a group and manage it as a single entity. The mission is considered successful when all mission objectives are accomplished; if all your forces have been defeated or you failed to achieve the objectives essential to the mission scenario, the mission is considered failed.

The formation under your command includes several groups of units moving on from one mission to another throughout the whole campaign. These include heavy artillery and armored vehicles. Experience and fighting efficiency of combat units within these groups increase if they accomplish their objectives successfully. Apart from "permanent" groups, in many missions you'll command additional forces including infantry, artillery, armored vehicles, support and supply units and reinforcements (these will arrive to combat positions after a certain period of time, while you perform the mission). When the mission is completed all additional forces leave your formation. You will not command air forces directly, but you'll be able to call air support of various kinds and assign tasks to aircraft (for example, specify reconnaissance areas or targets for bomb strikes); aircraft will perform these operations automatically.

Completing missions gives you a chance to increase experience of combat units in your "permanent" groups and upgrade your weapons and vehicles - e.g. replace an obsolete cannon with a newer model with greater firepower. Each mission allows you to upgrade one combat unit. The replacement you get depends on the level of the mission - the more difficult the mission you accomplished was, the more powerful cannon or tank will be made available to you.

From a historical point of view, the game features authentic weapons, vehicles and military equipment used by the troops at the time of particular combat operations, including experimental prototypes and weapons manufactured only in small numbers. However, there are certain historical and gameplay limits: only regular troops take part in operations, special forces (commandos and intelligence-gathering troops, except for paratroopers and snipers) are not present in the game. Air support can be used only after a certain period of time expires; some aircraft types may not be available in some missions.

Certain aspects of real combat operations have been simplified in the game, in order to make the gameplay easier and not distract the player with the need to deal with secondary problems. For example, there are no civilian populations in the game; no guerrilla forces take part in combat operations. You cannot take enemy soldiers prisoners. You can capture and use enemy artillery and fortifications, but not armored vehicles or subsidiary transport vehicles. Ammunition supplies and replacement manpower come from nominal depots; the main depot is always located at the rear of your troops and its supplies are unlimited. The time of day in the game never changes, all operations are performed during daytime.

MULTIPLAYER

General information

You can play Blitzkrieg via a LAN or the Internet or through the GameSpy master-server. The multiplayer game supports up to 16 players on one map: one player sets up their computer as server, and others connect to the server as clients (see below for details). When all players agree to begin the game, a direct connection is established between them; other players cannot join in. At server selection stage and later on during the game, players can chat with each other; the dialogue is displayed in the upper screen section or in the Console window.

In LAN games, existing game servers are found by broad-band query and listed in the Connection screen. Connecting to the GameSpy master-server (either via in-built game screen or via external GameSpy Arcade client application), the player enters the Blitzkrieg title room where they can view existing game sessions, create their own games or connect to open session as a client; they can also chat with all other visitors to the room.

To play a LAN game, you'll need TCP/IP network protocol installed. To play via the Internet, you'll need modem Internet connection with 19.2 Kbit/s speed or higher, or a dedicated Internet line. To create your own server you'll need direct Internet access (your IP-address must be visible from external network).

Individual missions to play are selected from the list by the player who created the server. Other players can choose which side to play on out of the available sides for this map. Players who chose the same side automatically become allies. At least two opposing sides are needed to start playing. While connecting, players can chat with each other. The game begins when all players agree to do so.

Connecting and launching the game

If you want to play a LAN game, you'll have to either launch your own server (by entering the name of the session) or join one of the existing sessions and enter your user name (nickname). After that you'll switch to the Staging Room (its interface is similar to that of the game's Staging room, see below). You'll also see list of players' nicknames and be able to chat with them.

If you select the GameSpy mode, the game will be connected to the GameSpy master-server. Enter your user name before connecting to the server. When the connection is established and the master-server list is read, you'll enter the game's title room.

The middle screen section displays list of active sessions. Each session's line displays the name of the game and the current number of players. The column showing the number of players displays the games you can join in green (the game hasn't been started yet); the games which already began are displayed in white (you cannot join them).

You can switch to the GameSpy Chat window by clicking on the appropriate button in the lower left screen corner. The right half of the chat window displays the list of players currently connected to the master-server. You can chat with those who are not playing (their names are shown at the upper section of the list). On the left, there's the chat window for players who wish to begin the game; the line for typing your messages in is located below.

Click on the "Create game" button to launch a session. The new session will appear in the title room's list. Click on "Join Selected Game" to join the selected session (you can join only open sessions). After you created your own session or joined an existing one, you'll switch to the Staging Room screen. There's also another way to find and create Internet games using GameSpy Arcade (see below).

Connection screen







Select "LAN" or "GameSpy" mode in the "Multiplayer game" menu.

After that, you'll switch to the connection or server creation screen. After the server list is queried over your LAN or connection to GameSpy master-server is established, a list of available sessions will be displayed. Now you can join one of the existing sessions or create a new game.

The upper section of Connection screen displays list of game sessions currently available on your LAN or GameSpy. The icon in the left column of the list indicates the session's state: "computer" means you can join the session; "swords" - means the game is under way and you cannot connect to it; "castle" means limited access server (you must enter password to connect to it). On the right the line displays the server name, MOD name and version, map name, type of game, number of players (connected/maximum possible) and the time of server's response (ping) in milliseconds. Click on a line in the list to select the game.

Buttons in the lower screen section allow you to:





-  - create your own server
-  - switch to the GameSpy master-server lobby to chat with players not yet connected to any session; this is available in the GameSpy Connection Screen only
-  - join selected session
-  - return to multiplayer game mode selection screen

GameSpy chat room

The GameSpy Chat Screen allows you to chat with other players connected to the GameSpy master-server who are looking for multiplayer game partners or discussing results of a game. The left screen section displays a message window; the field to type your messages in is located below. To send a message, type it in the field and press <Enter>. For non-English languages, you can switch your keyboard layout according to your operation system settings. Your message will be displayed in the message window along with your name. Use the scroll-bar at the right to scroll through messages. The right-bar screen section displays a list of players present in the Chat room. Icons in the line indicate the player's state (ready to chat or unavailable), your relations with them (display/ignore messages from this player) and the player's name. Use the scroll-bar at the right to scroll through the list of players.



Buttons in the lower screen section allow you to:

-  - display information about the player stored at the GameSpy server
-  - toggle your status: "ready to chat"/"away from keyboard"
-  - whisper to a selected player only
-  - return to the Connection screen

Game types

Blitzkrieg offers two types of multiplayer games: Assault and Flagcontrol. Essentially, both amount to capturing and holding one or more areas marked with flags. The differences include different initial conditions for each opposing side and different winning criteria.

Assault

Assault games have two opposing sides: advancing and defending. Players playing for the defending side must capture and hold all flags on the map during the time set for the game, or crush the opposition completely. The advancing side's objective is to capture at least one flag and hold it for the minimum necessary time. During the game, neither of the sides can receive reinforcements and must use the combat units made available at the beginning of the game. Both sides can use depots to replenish ammunition and replace personnel, and call for air support (depending on the mission). Players may swap places and act as attackers and defenders.

Flagcontrol

Unlike the previous game type, Flagcontrol provides equal conditions for each side. Each side's objective is to capture as many flags on the map as possible and hold them for as long as possible. Each captured flag brings one point per second while it's held. Also, each player gets one "base" point per second regardless of the number of flags. For every 150 points the player receives reinforcements. Accordingly, players who hold more flags get more points and can beat their opponents before the time limit for the game expires. Both sides can use air support and depots. This type of game reproduces an "enemy encounter" situation.

Flags

Flags mark some strategic locations that must be captured or held; they are not map objects and they are not actually present on the terrain. Flags are also displayed on the mini-map. They are visible regardless of your own or enemy troops' presence. A neutral flag is a gray rectangular, captured flag displays the "owner's" logo. To capture a flag, bring any combat unit directly to it and keep it there for the specified period of time (usually 30 seconds). After the flag is captured it changes appearance.

Creating a game




Click on the "Create server" button in the Connection screen, and you'll switch to Game creation screen. The left screen section displays list of available game maps, the right one displays a sketch map of the area.



Each line of the list includes map name, type and maximum number of players it supports and the size of the map. Map type determines the type of multiplayer game. To select a map, double-click on appropriate line.

The button in the lower left screen corner allows you to change multiplayer game parameters (alternatively, use the main menu; please refer to the "Game screens", "Parameters", and "Multiplayer game" sections of this document). To create a limited access server, enter a password in the appropriate field; otherwise leave this field empty.

Buttons in the lower right screen corner allow you to:

-  - change multiplayer settings
-  - create a session and switch to Staging room screen
-  - return to the Connection screen

Staging room

After you created game server or connected to one of available sessions, you switch to the Staging room screen where you can choose the side to play on, chat with other players and, view initial game conditions. When all players agree to the game conditions, the game begins.



The Staging room screen is similar to the Mission screen in a single-player game. The left screen section displays a list of players, the upper right shows a sketch map of the area, the lower right is the chat window.

List of players

The list includes the names of all players currently connected to the Staging room (you can enter/change your user name in Settings screen). The left column of the list displays an icon indicating whether the player is ready to begin the game. Other columns display the player's name, the side he chose to play for and the response time (in milliseconds).






Choosing sides

To choose the side to play for (one of the WWII participants), click on the button with the flag in the lower left screen corner (toggles available sides). You can choose either of the two sides on the map or allow the computer to choose randomly. Players who chose the same side as you automatically become your allies; all players on the other side will be your opponents.

Chat in Staging room

To chat with players connected to the Staging room, use the chat window in the right screen section. To send a message, type it in the text field (switch your keyboard language as may be necessary) and press <Enter>. Your message will be displayed in the message window along with your name. Use scroll-bar at the right to the scroll through available messages.

Other buttons in the lower screen section allow you to:

-  - choose the side to play for
-  - disconnect selected player from server (available to game host only)
-  - view conditions of the game
-  - signal that you're ready to start the game (cancel previous "ready" signal)
-  - return to Connection screen

Gameplay

When all players signal that they're ready (by clicking on the -button), you switch to the Combat screen and the mission begins. Your mission will be determined by the game type.

Combat units' markings

All combat units in a multiplayer game are marked with additional color bars directly above the health/damage bar. The bar's color indicates the unit's ownership. Combat units on the mini-map are displayed in the same colors:

- Green** - your troops
- Blue** - allied troops
- Red** - opposition troops
- Gray** - neutral units (e.g. lost artillery)



Chat during the mission

Players can send each other text messages (displayed in the upper screen section or in the Console window). The Console window displays more lines and allows you to view a "history" of the dialogue, but it hides part of the Game screen. To switch to message typing mode, press <Enter>; message line prompt will appear("«>>»). Type your message and press <Enter> again. If necessary, switch your keyboard language according to your operation system settings. To call up the Console window, press the <~> key, to close it press the <~> key again. To view old messages, use the <PgUp> and <PgDn> keys.

Communicating with allies; markers

Your "regular" messages are displayed to all players. If you need to send a message only to your allies, type it in the message line and press <Ctrl>+<Enter>. This message will not be displayed on the screens of the opposing players. Another good opportunity to send information to your allies is to set markers on the map (see the "Combat screen" and "Mini-map" sections of this document). Markers are displayed on the mini-map as concentric circles visible only to your allies (on the mini-maps shown on their screens). Markers are used primarily to indicate attack lines and targets, enemy troops' positions etc.

Exiting the game

There are several ways to finish your multiplayer game: it ends after the time limit expires, or after one of the sides gets the number of points needed to win. If you wish to exit the game before it's finished, call up the <Esc>-menu which provides access to the main game menu. When the game is finished, a window showing the winning side is displayed; after that, you switch to the Statistics screen displaying the game results (please refer to the "Game screens" and "Statistics screen" sections of this document). The Statistics table shows the total results for each side and individual results for each player. After that, you can continue to play - launch a new session or join one of the currently available game servers.

How to Play Blitzkrieg in GameSpy Arcade

You can play Blitzkrieg online through GameSpy Arcade, which comes conveniently bundled with the game. If you haven't done so already, insert your Blitzkrieg CD and install Arcade now. Then, to play Blitzkrieg online, just follow these simple instructions:

Launch GameSpy Arcade and Go to the Blitzkrieg Room:

Click on the GameSpy Arcade link in your Start Menu. When the software starts, you'll see a list of games and more along the left-hand side. There's plenty to do, but there's time for that later: Click on the Blitzkrieg button on the left to enter the Blitzkrieg room.

Find or Start a Blitzkrieg Server:

once you're in the Blitzkrieg room, you can meet or greet other players, find servers or create your own server. The top half of the application will list all of the available servers, including the number of people playing and your connection speed (measured by something called "ping." The lower your ping, the better.) Don't like any servers? Click on the "Create Room" button to start your own server and wait for people to sign up. Otherwise, double-click on a server of your choice to join in.

Join existing game/start a new one

After you selected an active game server or created your own, GameSpy Arcade will launch Blitzkrieg; you'll switch to the Staging Room where you can chat with other players and get ready for combat. When you are ready, click on the -button in the lower screen section. When all players in the Staging Room signal that they are ready to begin, the master-server host will be able to launch the game.

Problems?

If you have problems using Arcade, whether installing the program, registering it, or using it in conjunction with Blitzkrieg, consult the help pages, located at

<http://www.gamespyarcade.com/help/>

or e-mail GameSpy by using the form located at

<http://www.gamespyarcade.com/support/contact.shtml>