

THE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE TO OVERLORD

LOADING

Atari ST – switch off your machine, then insert Disk 1 in the drive. Switch your computer back on and Overlord will autoboot. During play, on-screen prompts will tell you when to insert another disk in the drive. (If your ST has a single-sided drive, then you won't hear any music during the endgame sequences.)

Commodore Amiga – switch off your machine, then insert Disk 1 in the drive. Switch your computer back on again and Overlord will autoboot. During play, on-screen prompts will tell you when to insert one of the other disks in the drive.

IBM PC and compatibles – insert Disk 1 in the appropriate floppy disk drive, then type 'Install' at the DOS prompt. Follow the on-screen instructions to configure the game for your machine. During play, on-screen prompts will tell you when to insert one of the other disks in the drive.

CHOOSING AN OPPONENT

When Overlord has loaded, the opening sequence launches automatically. Now you must choose which of the systems to compete for: Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu or Yottsu. You win by taking your opponent's base.

Hitotsu is the easiest: you only need Credits to buy items, the enemy is not very experienced and you have eight planets to fight over. (The enemy gets progressively stronger and wiser in Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu: in Futatsu there are 16 planets and you need Credits and Minerals to complete some purchases; in Mittsu and Yottsu there are 32 planets, and Credits, Minerals and Energy are needed to buy craft.)

Providing you have a mouse, the only time you need the keyboard is when you are naming or renaming things or confirming that you want to scrap a ship – otherwise, Overlord is controlled entirely by moving the cursor and clicking mouse buttons. The PC version can be played from the keyboard – use the cursor keys to move the on-screen pointer, pressing ENTER instead of clicking the left mouse button and ESCAPE instead of the right mouse button.

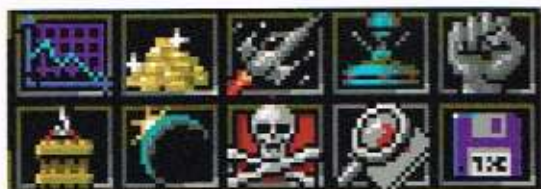
Click on your chosen opponent, and wait for the Main Screen to appear. (Choose to fight Wotok for the Hitotsu system if you want to follow the Quick Start Tour in the manual.)

THE MAIN SCREEN CONTROLS

The animated System Map on the Main Screen shows the planets in the system. Clicking on the arrows to the right of the display moves the Planet Cursor up and down the map. A view of the current planet appears in the Video Window to the right. The concept of 'the current planet' is important – some of the controls only work on the current planet and generally you have to own the current planet for those controls to take effect. When the game starts, the Planet Cursor is on your Starbase at the bottom of the map, and Starbase appears in the Video Window. So Starbase is the 'current planet'...

Ten icons in a panel below the System Map are used to access the other control screens in Overlord. (See the other side of this card.) To return to the Main Screen from elsewhere in the game, click on the right mouse button. All incoming messages appear on the scrolling text window that was used to display the system checks and log-on sequence when you started play; click on the message window to view any unread messages.

THE CONTROL SYSTEM



THE MAIN SCREEN CONTROL PANEL: Some of these icons appear again on the screens they access – you don't always have to return to the Main Screen to use them. Don't forget that some of them only act on the current planet, and then only when you have possession of that planet.

Government Screen Icon



Used to access economic information and review Resource levels on planets under your control, to review military strength, to ship Credits back to Starbase, to set tax rates and to review craft located above or on the surface of a planet.

Cargo Bay Screen Icon



Accesses the controls for the Cargo Bay on the current planet; allows cargo operations to be undertaken – loading and unloading Resources, crewing fuelling or scrapping craft that are in the Docking Bays on the current planet.

Buy Screen Icon



Calls up a catalogue of craft and resource-generating equipment that you can buy providing you have the required Credits and Resources to complete the transaction.

Planet Surface Screen Icon



Used to move craft between the surface of the current planet and its Docking Bays, and to activate or deactivate Horticultural and Mining Stations when they are on the surface.

Navigation Screen Icon



Allows you to send the craft under your control on journeys through space, to launch and land them and to locate craft in your fleet. Craft may also be renamed on the Navigation Screen.

Combat Control Screen Icon



Once you have an army, clicking here allows you to move Platoons into battle, set their aggression level, monitor the progress of a battle or retreat from a lost cause.

Planet Formatter



Clicking here dispatches your Atmosphere Processor to the current planet, providing it is still unformatted; when it arrives, planet formatting begins automatically.

Spying



Gives you the option to buy information about the current planet. Data on Resource levels, Population size and War Status can be purchased, or a package of all information can be bought.

Platoon Management Screen Icon



Accesses the screen where civilians are drafted, trained, equipped and commissioned into Platoons – the units that make up your army.

Disk Management



Calls up a control panel that allows a game position to be saved, loaded or restarted, a disk to be formatted or the computer reset.



OVERLORD™

INSTRUCTION MANUAL





CONTENTS

Introducing the game and this manual	2
The Game Objectives	5
Know Thine Enemy	7
Glossary	12
The Quick Start Tour	19
Controlling Overlord	
The Main Screen	49
The Government Screen	57
The Buy Screen	60
The Navigation Screen	63
The Planet Formatter	66
The Platoon Management Screen	68
The Cargo Bay Screen	71
The Planet Surface Screen	74
The Combat Control Screen	75
Spying	78
Disk Management	79
Mission Background	82
Managing Resources	87
Overlord Questions Answered	91
Index	95

WHAT IS OVERLORD?

Overlord is a single-player strategy-simulation game that offers you the chance to battle for economic and military domination in four planet systems. As a commander, you are personally responsible for managing resources, purchasing equipment, governing people, overseeing mining and farming operations, developing military strategies, training troops, planning campaigns and directing battles.

Four alien commanders, one in each planet system, seek to defeat you. Your ultimate goal is to crush all four opponents by conquering their bases, thereby protecting your home universe from the threat of invasion. Strategic skills are called for – both as commander-in-chief and as director of economic policies. Moral decisions also have to be taken; for instance, are you prepared to starve your people to death, tax them totally out of pocket and sacrifice them without mercy to the alien forces in order to hold on to power? Or do you see yourself as a beneficent ruler, who cares for the health and welfare of your subjects?

Mastering The Task

Overlord is an involved game – success is unlikely to

come without practice and a thorough understanding of the control methods. Make full use of the save game facility: the more difficult planet systems take a lot of completing, and it's worth saving your position regularly in case the enemy forces make sudden, rapid gains. The chance to go back to a position and try another strategy is the only advantage you have over life in the real world. Use it while you learn the skills of galactic domination.

Using This Guide

This document contains all the information you need to master Overlord. Read the Game Objectives (page 5) and use the Quick Reference Guide card to get going if you don't like finding your way around a manual before starting play – dip into the Glossary (page 12) for more detailed descriptions of the craft and equipment that you will encounter in the game, read Know Thine Enemy (page 7) for information on your alien opponents and their styles of play, then return to the manual when you need more detailed information.

If you prefer the more methodical approach, follow the Quick Start Tour (page 19) – it guides you step-by-step through the first stages of laying the foundations for a stable empire in the Hitotsu planet system.

The Control Section, which begins on page 48 of this manual, explains in detail how to manipulate the cursor-driven Control Screens. The Mission Background chapter (page 82) offers advice and tips on developing a strategy, the Managing Resources section (page 87) will help you develop a sound economy, and the Overlord Questions Answered (page 91) will be a useful source of help if you need to do some trouble-shooting. Finally, the index will help you to find information.

THE HISTORY OF EPSILON...

The only sure way to consolidate your position as a despot – an absolute ruler – is to rule absolutely. Your family has spent generations ensuring that the rule of the Dynasty of Mark is unassailable in the Epsilon galaxy.

A new threat to the stability of your rule has recently arisen. Reality is not what it seems...

Research scientists working on new inter-planetary drive systems for your craft made a major breakthrough in their understanding of space – with worrying consequences. In pursuit of a hyperdrive mechanism that would allow ships to take dimensional short-cuts on the route from A to B, scientists discovered entire new dimensions. Four new dimensions, in fact – Hitotsu,

Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu – each cloaked in a different reality and containing 6, 14 or 30 barren planets. Four new planet systems...

A few exploratory forays revealed that these planet systems appeared to be buffer zones that act as an uninhabited middle ground between your home universe and alien dimensions that lie beyond them. Each planet system can be accessed directly from Starbase, the planet at the heart of Epsilon, your solar system – activating the hyperdrive system on Starbase and setting the appropriate co-ordinates caused Starbase to appear at the edge of one of the buffer planet systems.

During an exploratory foray into Hitotsu, the 6-planet system, a sudden change was noticed – another planet had materialized. Rapidly activated scanning systems revealed that there were now eight planets in the system – Starbase, the six arid planets that had always been there, and the new arrival – which showed all the signs of harboring sentient life.

Jumping back through the hyperdrive portal to your own reality to consider this new development, you decided to pay a visit to the other three universes – and found that the planet count in each of them had increased by one. It looked like someone else from

somewhere else had just made the same discovery as you and was now entering the four new planet systems.

Then you decided to take another look at the Hitotsu system; co-ordinates were set on the hyperdrive plant, the activate switch thrown – and the transition was made without any energy consumption. Starbase transcended the dimensional barriers and had become a permanent part of Hitotsu, a system that now contains 8 planets.

A worrying prospect indeed – this permanent link between Hitotsu and Epsilon opened you to the threat of attack. Fearing the worst, you hurriedly set co-ordinates for Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu – and discovered that they too were now permanently linked to your home universe.

Four alien dimensions are now linked to Epsilon via four planet system. Your absolute rule might soon be under threat from four alien civilizations. Civilizations that could use the barren planets in each of the new systems to stockpile arms and equipment before mounting a devastating attack on Epsilon through the permanently-open portal that Starbase has now become. A worrying prospect indeed – but what can be done to ensure the safety of your hard-won empire?

Vaporizing Starbase might end the link – but it is too important a resource in the Epsilon system to cast off

casually. And there is no certainty that destroying Starbase would prevent the aliens from invading Epsilon. Besides, abandoning Starbase would be an admission of weakness, if not of defeat, and your people might see such an action as a sign that you have lost your capacity for absolute rule. A revolution could be sparked off by such a drastic action – and that revolution would take place shortly after you had destroyed your prime defensive resource.

No, there is only one course of action – to go on the offensive and do unto the four alien civilizations what they would almost certainly want to do unto you – only do it first, and do it quickly.

While appropriate military preparations were put underway, diplomatic teams were dispatched to the alien planets in Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu. Basic non-aggression pacts were agreed, a few spies left behind (once the concept of Ambassador and Diplomatic Mission had been explained to the aliens) and an uneasy peace initiated. Well, at least the treaties have bought you some time, time that can be used to get ready.

Armament manufacturing plants are working flat-out, producing craft and equipment. You have examined all the options. Now it's time to go on the offensive...



KNOW THINE ENEMY

After the introductory sequence to Overlord, you are presented with a screen that allows you to choose your opponent. Your Intelligence sources have managed to piece together some basic biographical details of the four alien dictators who await you in the planet systems of Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu, and at great personal risk, your spies have even managed to capture a likeness of your opponents.

Very little detail, however, is available on the most powerful of the four – Rorn. You would be wise to learn how to get the better of Wotok, Smine and Kart before attempting to challenge Rorn.

WOTOK

Leader of a strange monkey-like race, Wotok looks like a green gorilla and behaves rather like a stupid and angry child. Blessed with very little in the way of intelligence, Wotok apparently became leader of his race as a result of his immense physical strength. He has but a faint understanding of the principles of government, and is too stupid to retain and use advisers, whom he sees as potential rivals. Wotok has no time for diplomats or spies whom he views as Machiavellian schemers, permanently up to no good.

Wotok's physical attributes have allowed him to win every fight he has ever had – which is why he has risen to the top of the pile in his simian universe, where personal combat skills are held in high esteem. Personal disputes, like the competition for leadership, are resolved by ritual one-to-one combat in Wotok's world – a social system that has rather skewed the effects of evolution towards physical rather than mental prowess.

Wotok has come to believe that he is a superb strategist and one of the best military commanders in the history of creation. And no-one in his home universe is going to advise him otherwise. Fortunately for you, he is wrong.

The challenge Wotok presents is not that great. His attack strategies are simplistic – because of his aversion to taking advice, he won't listen to spies. So he doesn't target your Resource-rich colonies but invades at random.

And his lack of brainpower means that it takes him a while to come to the mediocre decisions that he makes. Take your time when you are fighting for the Hitotsu system – use it as a training ground in which to develop the skills you will need for the more proficient opponents that await you...



THE GAME OBJECTIVES

You are the commander and supreme leader of Epsilon, a universe located at the very edge of space. Scientific research into a new dimension-busting hyperdrive has had a rather unfortunate side effect – your Starbase is now permanently linked to and part of four barren planet systems: Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu. Each of the four planet systems acts as a buffer zone, and is linked to one of the four new dimensions that are populated by alien civilizations.

Clearly, this situation introduces an unwelcome instability into your life as the commander of Epsilon – suddenly, there are new dimensions for you to conquer. And new dimensions which, without doubt, harbor alien races just as eager to conquer your home system, Epsilon.

Your investigations have established that the four alien races, like your own people, are organized under a dictatorial system of government. Your opponents, Wotok, Smine, Krart and Rorn have established bases in the buffer planet systems which are now known as Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu, and Yottsu respectively.

Your objective is to become the supreme ruler of each of the four planet systems. Only when all four systems are totally under your control can you feel safe from the threat of alien attack.

And once you have control of a planet system, you can concentrate on amassing troops and resources there, ready for an invasion of the alien dimension that lies beyond... But such plans are of the future, and are outside the scope of Overlord I. The first priority is securing the safety of Epsilon.

Victory Conditions

Overlord offers four campaigns: the battles for control of Hitotsu, Futatsu, Mittsu and Yottsu. Victory in each campaign is yours if you can gain control of the alien base located at the opposite end of the planet system to Starbase; conversely, victory falls to the alien commander if he can wrest Starbase from your grasp.

There is no time limit set on a campaign – the struggle continues until you quit the mission or one side wins. Once a campaign has been started you cannot introduce additional resources from elsewhere, but it is possible to

