

LASER SQUAD PLAYERS MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

Laser Squad is a one or two player tactical wargame system that accurately simulates many aspects of individual level combat. It will take some time for a new player to become familiar with all aspects of the system, and we recommend that you load the program and go through the first section of this manual which provides you with a basic guide to playing the game. The second section should be treated as a reference manual for experienced players. Some features of the system are not implemented with the three scenarios provided with the main program, but future scenarios will explore the versatility of game play that Laser Squad can provide. The final section in this booklet provides instructions for the three scenarios provided with the main program.

LOADING THE GAME

Laser Squad is always loaded in two sections. First you must load the main program which is located at the beginning of side one on your cassette. When this has loaded you must select which scenario you wish to play and then load the appropriate scenario data file into the main program.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS:

SPECTRUM 48K or 128K

1. Connect the ear socket of your cassette recorder to ear socket of your spectrum.
2. Rewind the tape to side one.
3. Set the volume and tone to a high level.
4. Press J then hold down the symbol shift key and press P twice to get LOAD"".
5. Press ENTER on your computer.
6. Press PLAY on your tape recorder.

CBM64

1. Start with the Commodore switched off.
2. Remove all peripherals except joystick, tape and screen. The tape should be as far as practicable from the TV.
3. Switch on and check that the tape is rewound to side one.
4. Hold down the shift key and press RUN/STOP.
5. Press PLAY on your tape recorder.

AMSTRAD CPC 464

1. Rewind the cassette to side one.
2. Hold down CTRL and press the small enter key.
3. Press PLAY on the cassette unit.

When the main program has loaded stop the tape recorder. You will be asked to select a scenario. Press the number of the scenario you wish to play. Scenario one is located after the main program so you just have to press play on your cassette recorder. Scenario two is located at the start of side two and scenario three is in the middle of side two. If you want to load a game that you have previously saved then press 4. Only select option five if you have an expansion kit.

GAME CONTROLS

Once the game has loaded you must select the keyboard or joystick option you require (Spectrum only). All versions of the game can be played using the keyboard or joystick. The following keys are used for keyboard control:

Q	=	UP
A	=	DOWN
O	=	LEFT
P	=	RIGHT
SPACEBAR	=	FIRE

PART1: PLAYING THE GAME

OVERVIEW

Laser Squad is played in a series of game turns. Each player, during his turn, controls a small number of units which represent humans, droids or other creatures. Each unit has its own individual name and characteristics which affect the abilities and activity of that unit. At the start of each game turn each unit is allocated a number of Action Points (or APs) which are used for performing all activities of that unit such as movement, combat, manipulating objects etc. Once all action points are used for each unit, or the player does not wish to use any more, the 'end turn' option is selected and the other player (or the computer) takes his turn. The winner of the game is the first side to accumulate 100 victory points. Victory points are awarded for various things, such as eliminating enemy units or destroying certain installations, depending on the scenario being played.

GAME SET UP

You will be asked whether you want a one player game or a two player game. If you select the one player option the computer will take control of the second side. You will then be asked what level you wish to play at. The number of levels varies between scenarios and the higher the level the more difficult the computer is to beat. If you are playing with two players then only the player whose turn it is should be allowed to see the screen.

Each player now selects equipment and deploys his units.

EQUIPMENT SELECTION

In each scenario you are allocated a number of Credits to spend on armour, weapons and ammunition. The first thing you must do is select armour for each unit. Your units are displayed on the left of the screen and you select armour for each unit in sequence. Use the UP and DOWN controls to select the type of armour and press FIRE when you are satisfied with your choice. If you select '0' then the unit will have no armour. If you select a number from one to four then the unit will be given an armour type according to the specifications displayed in the table on the right of the screen. A full explanation of armour is included in the reference section.

After you have allocated armour to each unit you then select equipment. Initially the object selector is highlighted. Use the RIGHT and LEFT controls to change the object currently selected. Each object's unique graphics symbol and name is displayed together with the cost of purchasing the object. In order to allocate objects to a unit use the UP and DOWN controls to highlight the unit you require and then use RIGHT to add the currently selected object to that unit's equipment, or LEFT to subtract the object. You cannot give an object to a unit if you have insufficient credits, or if that unit's weight or size limits would be exceeded. Once you are satisfied with your selection press FIRE twice to continue the game.

All weapons are loaded with ammunition when purchased, but extra ammunition for each weapon is available. Consult the weapons table in the reference section for details on weapons and ammunition.

DEPLOYMENT

Each unit is deployed in turn until all units have been placed on the map. The deployment mode shows the name and equipment of the unit to be deployed on the right of the screen and the map window on the left. Use UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT to move the flashing white cursor around the map until you have

found the deployment square you want. Each scenario will specify which spaces you can deploy on. Place the cursor over the deployment square and press FIRE to deploy the unit.

GAME OPTIONS

Before each game turn starts you will be presented with a menu which allows you to save and load games. Press the number of the option you require or press fire to continue with the game.

- CHANGE CONTROLS:** Allows you to change the controls of the game between different joysticks or keyboard (Spectrum only).
- SAVE GAME:** Allows you to save the current game to tape. Make sure record and play on your tape recorder are pressed before you select this option. .
- LOAD GAME:** If you select this option then the current game is abandoned in order to load a new game. You will be presented with the same menu that appears when the main program is first loaded.
- VERIFY GAME:** If you have just saved the current game to tape then use this option to make sure that it has saved properly.

CURSOR MODE

At any time the game is in one of three different modes; cursor mode, select mode or fire mode. Each game turn starts in cursor mode which simply allows you to move the cursor around the map using UP, DOWN, LEFT and RIGHT. The display on the right of the screen shows information about the map space under the cursor as follows:

- MAP:** The name of the terrain feature such as grass, floor, wall etc.
- OBJECT:** The name of any object on the ground.
- UNIT:** The name of any unit under the cursor.
- OBJECT IN USE:** The object that the unit is currently using, if any.

CURSOR MODE OPTIONS

Laser Squad is controlled via a series of menus which are simply lists of different options available to you at any time. To display a menu, whichever mode you are in, press FIRE. Use UP and DOWN to highlight the option of your choice and press FIRE to select the option. The options that can be available in cursor mode are as follows:

- SELECT: If the cursor is placed over one of your units with APs remaining then you will be able to select that unit for movement and other actions. Once you select this option you will enter selection mode.
- INFO: If the cursor is placed over any unit then information on that unit can be displayed.
- NEXT UNIT: This option simply moves the cursor to another friendly unit with APs remaining.
- SCANNER: A strategic map of the entire playing area can be displayed showing the positions of all your units and any enemy units that are currently spotted.
- CANCEL: The cancel option in each menu just clears the menu and returns you to the current mode.

SELECT MODE

In Select mode the message display on the right of the screen shows essential information about the unit you have selected (see fig. 1). Most important is the number of Action Points remaining and the direction indicator which shows which direction the unit is facing. Once you have selected a unit then the directional controls are used to move the unit as follows:

- LEFT: Rotate unit left
- RIGHT: Rotate unit right
- UP: Move unit forwards in the direction that it is facing
- DOWN: Move unit backwards

SELECT MODE DISPLAY

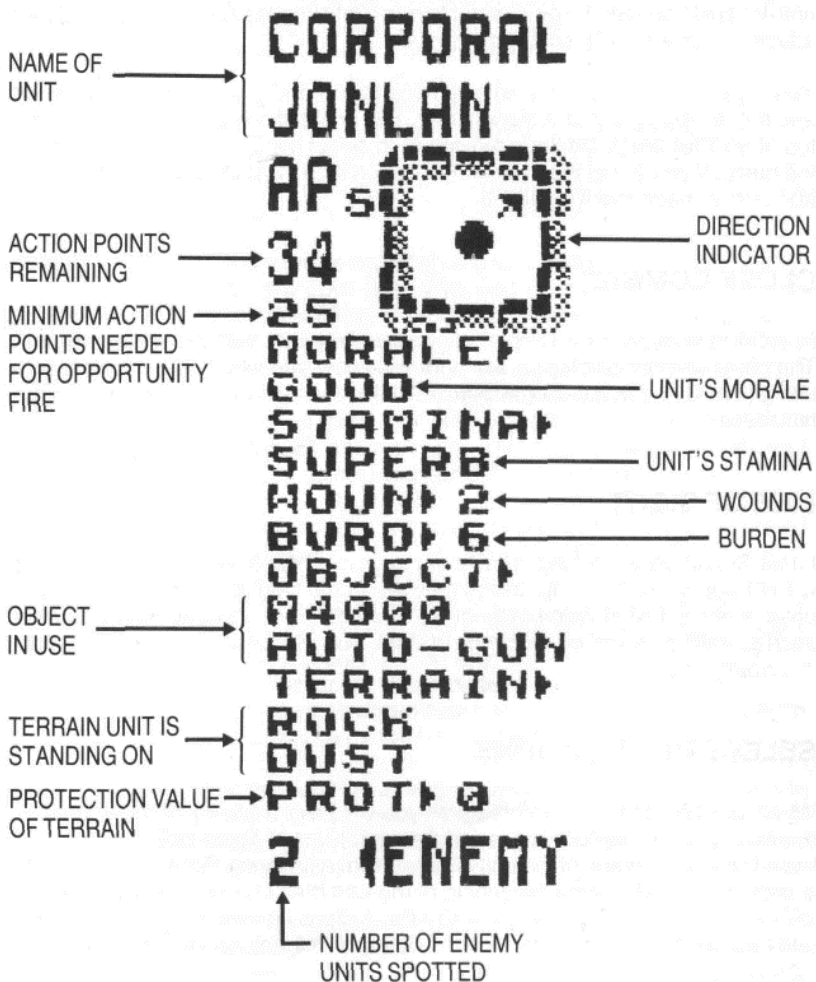


Fig. 1

MOVEMENT

Moving a unit will always cost Action Points, depending on the terrain that is being moved over. Moving diagonally will cost an extra two APs and rotating a unit 45° costs one AP. If you attempt to move into impassable terrain the unit will attack the terrain and possibly destroy it.

You are allowed to move the selected unit over friendly units but you can never end movement on top of a friendly unit. The only options available to a unit on top of another are to continue moving or to select the END MOVE option from the menu. If you select the END MOVE option then the unit will be placed on the last empty space that it occupied.

CLOSE COMBAT

In order to engage in close combat simply move your unit into an enemy unit. The close combat display on the right will show you what weapon the unit is using (if any), the accuracy (% chance to hit), the AP cost, the damage and the hit location.

LINE OF SIGHT

Laser Squad uses a hidden movement system which means that enemy units will not appear on the map unless they are in the field of vision of one of your units. A unit's field of vision extends 45° from the front. Various types of terrain such as walls or doors will block line of sight. You will not see an enemy unit until it is clearly in view.

SELECT MODE OPTIONS

When you press FIRE in select mode you will have a variety of menu options depending on the circumstances of the unit. Most of these options cost APs based on a percentage of the units Action Point Allowance. For example if a unit is allocated 50 APs at the beginning of the turn then changing an object costs 20% of its AP allowance which is 10 APs. Actions cannot be carried out if the unit has insufficient APs (although the option is still included in the menu list).

The following menu options are available in select mode:

END MOVE:	Ends the selection of the unit and returns to cursor mode. The unit can still be re-selected provided it still has APs remaining.
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- FIRE:** If the unit has an object in use then it can be fired or thrown. Selecting this option changes the display to fire mode.
- CHANGE:** If the unit is carrying one or more objects then this option is used to select an object for use or to change the object in use. The unit's objects are displayed on the screen with the ammunition amount, weight and size of each object. The white pointer on the left shows which object is currently in use, if any. Use the UP and DOWN controls to move the pointer to the object you want to use and press FIRE to change object. Performing this action costs 25% of the units Action Point allowance.
- PICK UP:** If the unit is standing on a space with one or more objects on the floor then they can be picked up. This option displays all the objects in the space in a similar manner to the change object display. Use the UP and DOWN controls to move the pointer to the object you want to pick up and press FIRE to implement the action. If you don't want to pick up any objects move the pointer to CANCEL and press fire. This option costs 50% if the unit has an object in use or 25% if it does not.
- DROP:** If the unit has an object in use then it can be dropped costing 10% of its AP allowance. It is possible to hide an object that is dropped, depending on the size of the object and the capacity of the terrain the unit is standing on. For example you can hide a grenade in a plant pot but not a rifle, you cannot hide anything on a floor space but you can hide most things under a bed. If it is possible to hide the dropped object then a small menu is displayed asking you whether you wish to hide the object or not.
- LOAD:** If the unit has a ranged combat weapon in use and it is also carrying the appropriate ammunition for that weapon then it can be loaded with new ammunition costing 50% of the unit's AP allowance.
- PRIME:** If the unit has a grenade in use which is not primed then it can be primed at a cost of 20%. Use the UP and DOWN controls to alter the timer and press FIRE to prime the grenade. The value of the timer determines when the grenade will explode. If the timer is set to 0 then it will explode at the end of your turn. If it is set to 1 then it will go off at the end of your opponent's turn, and if it is set to 2 then it will go off at the end of your next turn, and so on.

- OPEN:** If the unit is facing towards a closed, unlocked door then it can be opened. The cost is 20% of AP allowance.
- CLOSE:** If the unit is facing towards an opened door it can be closed. The cost is 20% of AP allowance.
- UNLOCK:** If the unit is facing towards a locked door and it is using the correct key then the door can be unlocked. The cost is 25% of AP allowance.
- LOCK:** If the unit is facing towards an unlocked door and it is using the correct key then the door can be locked. The cost is 25% of AP allowance.
- SCANNER:** The strategic map can be displayed with no AP cost.
- CANCEL:** Clear menu and return to movement.

FIRE MODE

When you select the FIRE option the main display will change from a perspective map to a Line of Fire map which shows all the terrain that blocks shooting or throwing. All units are replaced with a blob depicting the target area of each unit. The square cursor is replaced by a flashing cross-hair cursor for targeting shots. The information display on the right shows the weapon being used and the essential information for ranged combat (see fig. 2). In order to fire a weapon move the cross-hair cursor to the desired target point, press FIRE to display the fire mode menu and select the type of shot you require. You will not be able to fire a shot if the cursor is outside the unit's field of vision.

FIRE MODE OPTIONS

Only ranged combat weapons will have the three fire options for automatic fire, snap shots and aimed shots. Some weapons are unable to do automatic fire. If the unit is using any other object then only the throw option will be available.

The following options are available in Fire Mode:

- AUTO:** Automatic fire is a burst of continuous fire between two specified points. A minimum of three shots must be fired and the unit must have enough APs for at least three auto-shots in order to select this option. Once you have selected automatic fire you must select a second target point within the unit's field of vision. Press FIRE when you have moved the cursor to the desired point. You will then

FIRE MODE DISPLAY

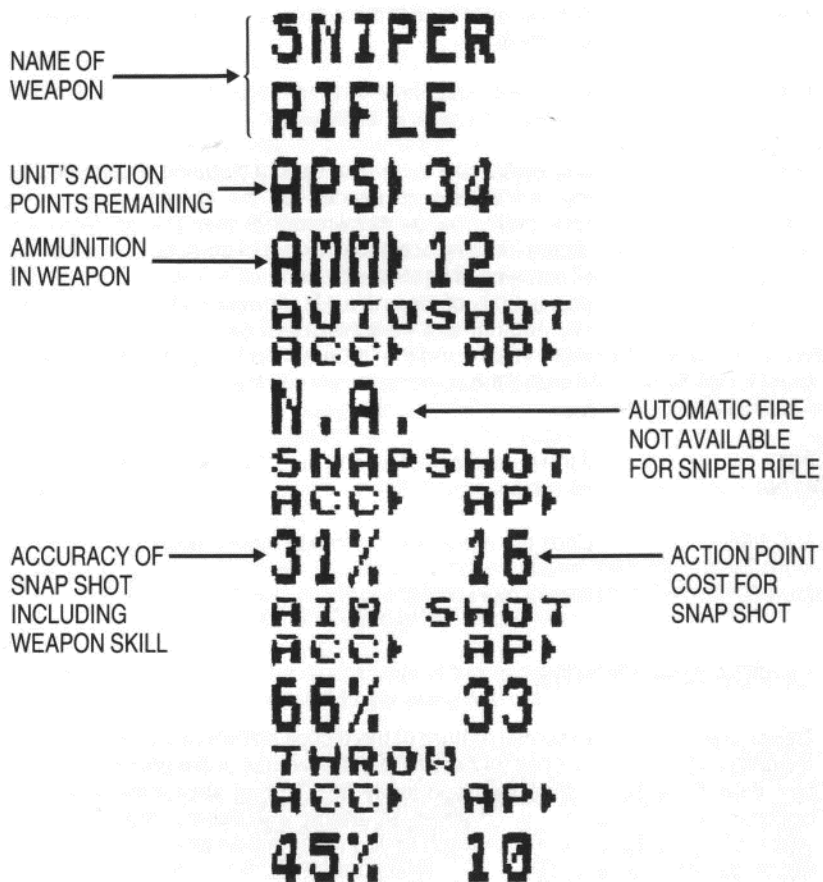


Fig. 2

be asked to select the number of shots you wish to fire from three up to the maximum allowed by the unit's Action Points. Use the UP and DOWN controls to change the number of shots and press FIRE to execute the shots.

- SNAP:** A snap shot is a single shot, but is more accurate than automatic fire.
- AIM:** An aimed shot is the most accurate type of shot but requires the most Action Points.
- THROW:** Any object can be thrown up to a distance determined by the unit's strength divided by the object's weight. An object will never be thrown further than the cursor which allows for fairly accurate placing of objects. The accuracy of throwing is equivalent to the unit's agility rating and the cost is 20% of the unit's AP allowance. If a thrown object hits another unit then the object can be caught provided the unit is facing the thrower and has no object currently in use. If the object is not caught then it will fall at the unit's feet.
- INFO:** If the cursor is over a unit then information on that unit can be displayed.
- END FIRE:** Ends fire mode and returns to select mode.
- CANCEL:** Clears menu.

OPPORTUNITY FIRE

Opportunity fire is an essential feature of the tactics employed in Laser Squad. If a unit is left with at least half its Action Point Allowance at the end of the game turn then it will be eligible for opportunity fire. During your opponents turn opportunity fire will be triggered when an enemy unit moves into the field of vision of your unit. Control will switch to you in fire mode which allows you to shoot the enemy unit. Once you select the END FIRE option then your opponent can continue with his turn.