

Game Design Document: "Commanders: Build and Battle"

Minimal-Mechanics Mobile Strategy Game

1. Game Overview

Core Concept: A mobile RTS where players command specialized armies through dual commanders, manage base building via worker specialists, and engage in formation-based tactical combat.

Key Pillars:

- **Strategy-First:** Minimal micromanagement, maximum tactical depth
- **Mobile-Optimized:** 5-15 minute sessions, intuitive touch controls
- **Progressive Complexity:** Simple early game → multi-front warfare late game

Unique Selling Points:

- Dual-commander control system
- Worker specialization mechanics
- Drag-and-drop formation customization

2. Core Game Loop

Diagram

Code

Match Flow:

1. **Early Game (0-3 min):** Secure resources, build core base
2. **Mid Game (3-8 min):** Expand territory, scout enemies
3. **Late Game (8-15 min):** Commander ability clashes, objective completion

3. Resource System

Essence Economy

- **Primary Resource:** Used for all actions
- **Collection Methods:**
 - **Miners:** Specialized workers (3 → 6 max)
 - Auto-assign to richest node

- Upgrades: +25% gather rate, +10 carry capacity
- **Passive Income:** 20% of Miner output from HQ

Worker Management

Worker Type	Role	Max Count	Key Upgrades
Miner	Resource collection	3 → 6	Overcharge (3x speed for 10s)
Builder	Construction/repairs	3 → 6	Rapid Assembly (-30% build time)

Worker Mechanics:

- Training at HQ (50 Essence, 15s)
- Miners killed: Permanent -10% income penalty
- Builders killed: +15s to all build times

4. Base Building System

Zone-Based Construction

Build Zone Types:

Zone	Buildings	Strategic Value
Core	HQ, Tech Lab	Combo bonuses
Frontline	Defense Towers	Chokepoint control
Expansion	Barracks, Scout Camp	Aggressive positioning

Building Types:

- **HQ:** Worker training, tech upgrades
- **Barracks:** Unit production
- **Tech Lab:** Upgrades and research
- **Defense Tower:** Area denial
- **Scout Camp:** Auto-scout training

Construction Process

- 1. Select zone → Choose building
- 2. Builder auto-dispatched (5s supervision)
- 3. Miners pause harvesting during build
- 4. Adjacency bonuses activate

Synergy Examples:

- Barracks + Tech Lab: 15% faster unit training
- 2x Defense Towers: Linked targeting system

5. Commander System

Dual-Commander Mechanics

Commander Types:

Role	Abilities	Preferred Units
Frontline	Shield Wall, Taunt	Tanks, Infantry
Support	Healing Wave, Scout Pulse	Archers, Artillery

Progression:

- Start with 1 Commander
- Unlock 2nd at Tier 2 tech (500 Essence)

Formation Customization

Formation Panel Features:

- 5x5 grid with commander at center
- Drag unit icons to positions
- Formation presets: "Phalanx", "Flanking", "Skirmish"
- Terrain bonuses: +15% defense in chokepoints

Unit Capacity:

- Start: 4 units per commander

- Max: 10 units via Tech Lab upgrades

6. Unit System

Squad-Based Combat

Unit Types (RPS Counters):

Unit	Strong Against	Weak Against
Infantry	Light Vehicles	Tanks
Tanks	Infantry	Anti-Armor
Cavalry	Ranged	Pikemen
Artillery	Buildings	Scouts

Training:

- Produced as squads (e.g., "Rifleman Squad x5")
- Auto-replenish at barracks if wiped

Auto-Scout Mechanics

- Trained at Scout Camp (75 Essence)
- Behavior:
 - Spiral exploration pattern
 - Auto-avoid enemies
 - Instantly destroyed when detected
- Upgrades:
 - Stealth field (Tier 2)
 - Decoy system (Tier 3)

7. Combat System

Tactical Mechanics

- **Terrain Bonuses:**
 - High ground: +15% range
 - Forests: Stealth concealment
- **Commander Synergy:**
 - <2 tile distance: Shared auras
 - 5 tile distance: Morale penalty

Controls:

- Tap commander → Drag to move formation
- Two-finger tap: Swap commanders
- Pinch-zoom: Strategic view
- Ability wheel: Commander powers

8. Tech Progression

Three-Tier System:

Tier	Unlocks	Cost
1	Basic units, 3 workers	Starting
2	2nd Commander, Scouts	500 Essence
3	Super units, Elite upgrades	1000 Essence

Upgrade Examples:

- Miner Efficiency (+25% gather)
- Builder Rapid Assembly (-30% build)
- Commander Respawn Reduction

9. Map & Objectives

Map Features:

- Asymmetric design with 3 lanes
- Destructible bridges/chokepoints
- Capture points for bonuses

Victory Conditions:

- Annihilation (Destroy enemy HQ)
- Domination (Hold 3 points for 2 min)
- Resource Race (Collect 2000 Essence)

10. Mobile Implementation

UI/UX Design

Key Screens:

- **Command Hub:** Formation panel + ability wheel
- **Build Interface:** Zone-based radial menu
- **Worker Dashboard:** Miner/Builder status icons

Optimizations:

- Color-coded unit outlines (per commander)
- Auto-pathfinding with formation integrity
- One-handed gesture controls

Performance Targets

- Devices: Mid-range iOS/Android
- Session: ≤ 15 minutes
- Matchmaking: ≤ 30 seconds

11. Monetization

Model: Free-to-Play + Cosmetic

- **Commanders:** Visual skins (\$2-5)
- **Formations:** Animation packs (\$1-3)
- **Workers:** Cosmetic tools/outfits

- **Battle Pass:** Seasonal objectives

Anti-Pay-to-Win:

- No stat-boosting purchases
 - All commanders balanced
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12. Development Roadmap

Phase 1: Core Loop Prototype

- Commander movement + formation system
- Basic resource gathering

Phase 2: Vertical Slice

- One complete map + 2 commanders
- AI opponent system

Phase 3: Content Expansion

- 5 commanders
 - 10 maps
 - PvP matchmaking
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Appendices:

- Full unit stats spreadsheet
- Map design schematics
- Control scheme diagrams

This design achieves strategic depth through:

- ✓ **Worker specialization** creating resource tension
- ✓ **Formation customization** enabling player expression
- ✓ **Commander synergy** rewarding tactical positioning
- ✓ **Auto-systems** reducing micromanagement

Ready to prototype the formation editor first!