

Front Line

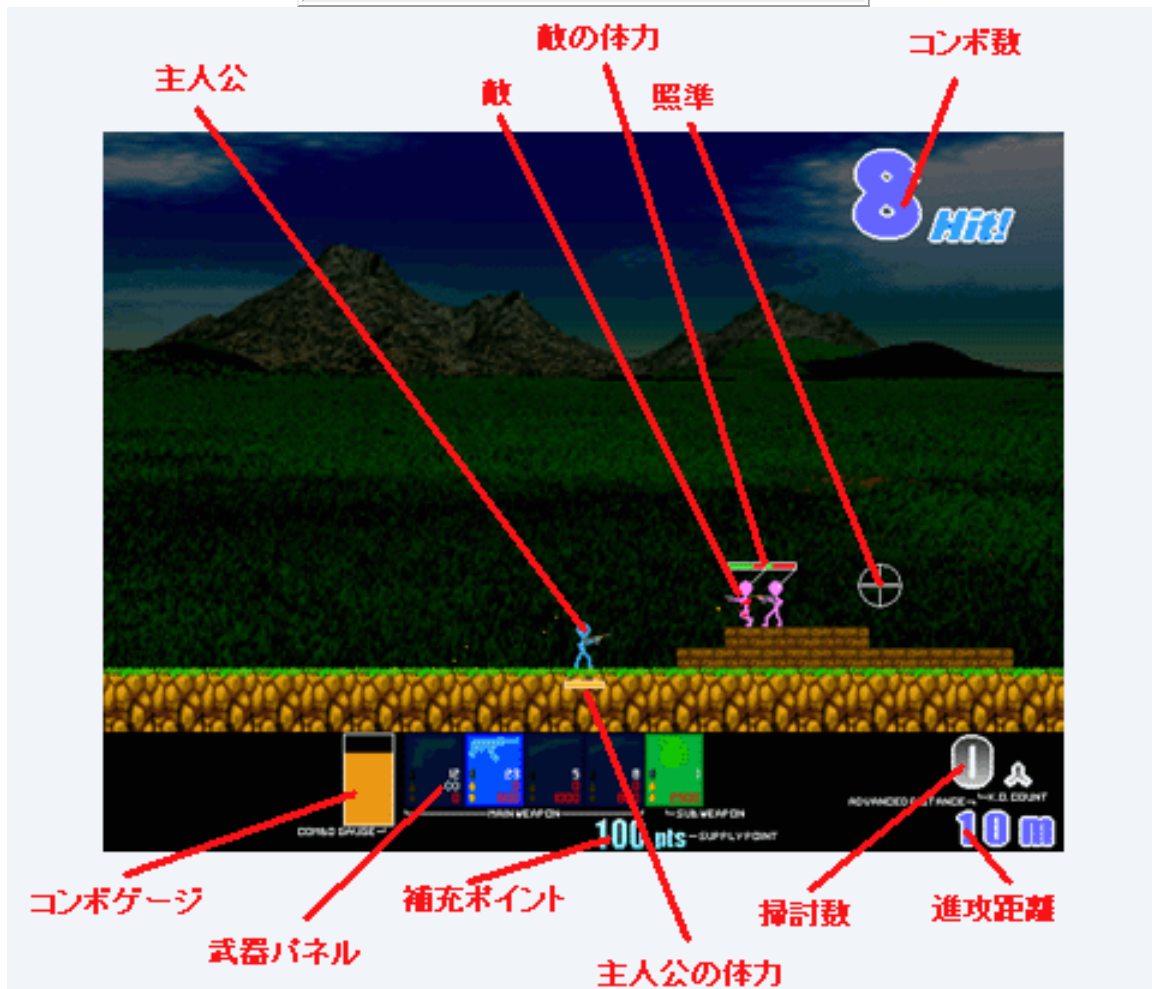
Instruction Manual

About the Game Modes



START	Starts the main game.
RECORD	View rankings for each category, your play data, and the medals you've been awarded.
CREDITS	Watch the staff roll. However, you cannot select this option unless you have reached the rank of Major or above .
EXIT	Exits the game.
PlayTime PlayCount	Your total play time and number of play sessions. These are counted even if you quit the game partway through.

About the In-Game Screen

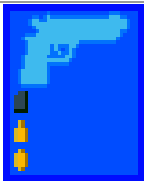


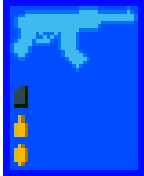
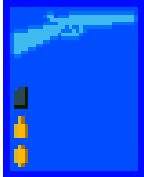
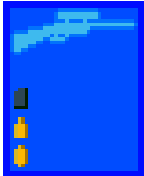
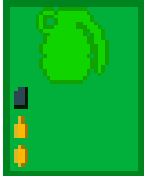
Protagonist	The character controlled by the player.
Protagonist's Health	When this reaches zero, it's game over.
Enemy	The characters you must defeat.
Enemy Health	Displayed immediately after you deal damage to an enemy.
Combo Gauge	Jumps to maximum when you deal damage to an enemy. If you deal damage again before the gauge runs out, it becomes a combo.
Combo Count	Your current combo count. The supply points awarded when you defeat an enemy equal Combo Count × 100 pts. A headshot with the sniper rifle always awards a flat 1000 pts.
K.O. Count	The number of enemies you have defeated.
Advance Distance	The distance you have advanced. A supply crate drops every 100 m. Picking up a supply crate restores your health to full.
Weapon Panel	Lets you select weapons and resupply ammunition .
Supply Points	Points used to resupply your weapons' ammunition. Mainly earned by defeating enemies.
Crosshair	The point your weapon is aiming at.

In-Game Controls

Mouse	Moves the crosshair.
Left Click	Fires your weapon at the crosshair. On the weapon panel, this selects a weapon. There are no plans to add shortcut keys for weapon selection or resupply. The effort of switching weapons is part of this game's flavor. Adding shortcut keys would mean the mouse's crosshair rarely has to move away from the front at all, making the game extremely monotonous and flat as a result. Weighing the effort of swapping weapons against the effort of defeating enemies and the effort of resupplying, and finding your own balance among them, is the real appeal of this game. Please understand that adding shortcut keys would make it far less enjoyable.
Right Click	Swaps your weapon's magazine. Any rounds remaining in the magazine are discarded. On the weapon panel, this consumes supply points to resupply ammunition.
Z Key / C Key or A Key / D Key	Moves left and right.
X Key or W Key	Raises your shield. Completely blocks bullets coming from the front.
Space Bar	Throws your sub-weapon (grenade).
TAB Key	Pauses the game.
ESC Key	Force-quits the game.

Weapon Descriptions

	Handgun A semi-automatic pistol. Reserve ammunition is unlimited, but each round has low stopping power.
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	Machine Gun A fully-automatic gun. Capable of rapid fire, but accuracy tends to scatter.
	Shotgun A single-shot shotgun. Spreads over a wide area, but is not suited to long range.
	Sniper Rifle A single-shot rifle. A hit to the enemy's head takes them out in one shot, but you can expect almost no damage against the torso.
	Grenade A sub-weapon you can throw while still holding your gun. Detonates after a set time, defeating enemies with shrapnel. Throw it so that the position of the crosshair at the moment of release becomes the peak of the arc.

Basic Flow



When an enemy appears, aim the mouse cursor at them and **left-click to fire your weapon** to defeat them.

You can also **throw a grenade with the space bar**.

There is no concept of "clearing" the game.
Simply advance as far as you can, endlessly.

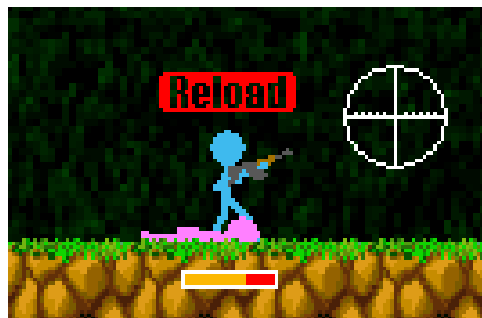
To advance further, make full use of
the right weapon for each situation.



Your weapon's ammunition is shown on the weapon panel at the bottom of the screen.

The top number is **the rounds remaining in the magazine**,
the middle number is **your reserve ammunition**,
and the bottom number is **the supply points required per magazine**.

Left-click the weapon panel to
switch to a different weapon.



When you run out of ammo, **right-click to reload**.

You cannot reload without reserve ammunition.

Reloading discards any rounds remaining in the magazine.



Once you've accumulated supply points from defeating enemies and the like,

right-click on the weapon panel to
consume supply points and replenish your reserve ammunition.

About Data Reset

If you want to reset your ranking information and play data,
delete the "Rank.dat" file in the Front Line folder,
and your ranking information will return to its initial state.

Frequently Asked Questions

When this game was first released, it gained a great deal of popularity,
and at the same time a large number of requests and opinions were posted on the message board.
During test play, we made adjustments reflecting a variety of feedback,
but most of the opinions submitted after release concern things that were
already trimmed away during development, each for its own reason and intent. We've listed them here.

Q. No matter how many times I try, I only get a few hundred meters.

A. Rather than sticking to one weapon, train yourself to use whichever weapon suits the situation.
When things get dangerous, throwing a grenade without hesitation will sharply raise your chance of survival.

Q. Does the rain mean anything?

A. It's purely atmospheric; it doesn't change any play conditions.
If it has any effect at all, it's only that the sound of rain makes other sounds a little harder to hear.
The chance of rain occurring is a fixed probability.

Q. What are the occasional explosions?

A. They represent enemy mortar fire landing nearby.
You cannot take damage from those explosions.

Q. This is too hard.

A. Based on test play, we tuned the game so that even a fairly average player
can advance to around 1000 meters. Reflect on each playthrough and keep training.
If you keep getting caught between enemies front and back,
you should be fighting in a way that avoids getting pincered in the first place.

Q. Please tell me the conditions for earning medals.

A. For medals you've already earned, hovering the mouse cursor over them will show the requirements.
The requirements for the rest are kept secret so you can enjoy discovering them yourself.

Q. What should I do when an enemy helicopter shows up?

A. A helicopter is a tough opponent for infantry, so trying to fight it is reckless.
Trying to dodge won't help either since it tracks you with auto-aim, so block it with your shield.

Q. Please tell me how to shoot down enemy helicopters.

A. It is possible to shoot one down, but the risk is far too high without considerable skill.
There's also no need to shoot one down at all, so it's wiser not to try to force the issue.
The method itself is kept secret so you can enjoy discovering it yourself.

Q. There seems to be a hit detection area off-screen to the rear for some reason.

A. That's an enemy pursuer coming from behind. They exist just slightly outside the visible screen, so you can defeat them there with your weapon.

Q. What about adding a concept of extra lives?

A. That would remove far too much tension.

In keeping with the game's tone of "die and it's over," anything else would end up feeling worse, not better.

It's precisely because you only get one life that an enemy sniper's shot or a helicopter's gunfire feels genuinely frightening.

Q. Isn't there a concept of "clearing" the game?

A. It was originally designed with a Game & Watch-style concept in mind.

We want players to find enjoyment in playing on and on as the difficulty gradually rises.

Q. What about offering different difficulty modes?

A. Precisely because there's no goal, offering separate difficulty modes wouldn't mean much.

If a player who can only reach 500 meters on Normal reaches 2000 meters on Easy, that doesn't deliver the satisfaction the game is meant to provide.

Most games with adjustable difficulty offer it so that players of any skill level can reach the ending.

This game has no ending, and advancing a long distance by lowering the difficulty wouldn't mean much anyway.

What matters isn't extending your advance distance by lowering the difficulty, but thinking each time about why you died at such a short distance, and finding ways to enjoy going further on your next playthrough.

I believe it only feels rewarding because you're able to go further precisely through your own effort and improvement.

Q. I'd like shortcut keys for switching weapons or resupplying.

A. The effort of switching weapons is part of this game's flavor.

Adding shortcut keys would mean the mouse's crosshair rarely has to move away from the front at all,

making the game extremely monotonous and flat as a result.

Weighing the effort of swapping weapons against the effort of defeating enemies and the effort of resupplying, and finding your own balance among them, is the real appeal of this game.

Please understand that adding shortcut keys would make it far less enjoyable.

Q. How about adding enemies that play dead?

A. More than adding thrills, I think most players would just feel it's unfair, and it would become a major source of stress.

In the heat of battle, stopping to check whether every body is really dead would just be a hassle, and on the other hand, if an enemy you thought you'd defeated suddenly attacked you, I think most players would think, "I already took you down, so stay down."

Q. What about adding the ability to dash?

A. Letting players dash their way past enemies to cover more distance than they would by actually fighting

goes against the concept of this game.

We want to preserve the feeling of gradually advancing while pushing through dangerous situations.

Q. I'd like the crosshair to still show while I'm defending.

A. The crosshair disappears while defending in order to prevent players from lining up a shot on an enemy while blocking, then briefly dropping their guard to fire, then immediately going back on the defensive to line up the next enemy — that kind of negative play pattern.

If reloading and weapon selection worked the same way, the player's risk would drop considerably, and cheap play would end up being the most advantageous strategy.

Q. What about adding a wider variety of weapons?

A. When introducing a new weapon, balance and differentiation are what matter most.

It needs stats that aren't too strong or too weak, and it also needs its own distinct characteristics compared to the other weapons, or else there's no reason for it to exist.

Adding a new weapon that, in the end, "plays about the same as any other weapon" would be pointless,

so just as every existing weapon has its own strengths and weaknesses, a new weapon would need a meaningful degree of difference from the others.

Five weapons may feel like a small number, but for that very reason, adding another one requires extremely careful design.

Q. What about resupplying ammo by looting defeated enemies, or having it dropped from above?

A. If it meant adding extra supply drops on top of the current system, that would be one thing, but relying solely on dropped supplies for resupply would strip the resupply system — which is core to this game — of its meaning, and it would become stressful when you can't easily get ammo for the weapon you want to use. Please understand that the current resupply process is one of the core pleasures of this game.

Q. How about a bonus mode with unlimited ammo?

A. It's a bit uncertain how satisfying unlimited ammo would really feel in this game.

If it were like Resident Evil, where powerful weapons have limited ammo that feels too precious to waste on weak enemies, that would make more sense, but in Front Line, the ammo for strong weapons does cost more supply points, yet in practice you can resupply almost freely as long as you don't care about your score, so removing the limit wouldn't offer any benefit beyond saving you the trouble of resupplying. Not even needing to reload would make things far too dull, I think.

Q. How about adding a knife for close combat?

A. Even if we added one, a knife would probably never actually get used.

It's already far safer to gun an enemy down before they get close, and no matter how powerful it was, deliberately letting an enemy close the distance would be too risky.

For example, against an enemy with a shotgun, taking them out from a distance with a machine gun or sniper rifle is safer than closing in and finishing them off with a knife.

If the enemy gets a shotgun blast off before you land the knife hit, that would deal a huge amount of damage.

What's more, adding a new weapon panel entry for a "knife" would only increase risk, including the added effort of switching to it. And if it were designed to activate automatically based on distance to the enemy, you'd lose techniques like prioritizing a distant sniper enemy over a nearby handgun-wielding enemy. There are also control-scheme reasons why we can't add a dedicated key for a knife.

And of course, if we add it to the protagonist's arsenal, enemies would naturally start using it too. That would introduce the unfairness of "get too close and it's basically over."

Q. How about adding tougher enemies beyond regular soldiers, like heavy infantry?

A. I suspect most players would just force their way through with a barrage of grenades, so unless they appeared in a heavy, continuous stream, they wouldn't end up feeling very threatening.

Personally, I think it's already quite dangerous to have a sniper positioned behind a group of simple machine-gun soldiers, and that kind of situation already happens quite often as things stand, so in that sense a group of ordinary enemies is harder to deal with than a single reinforced one, and I think that adds more depth to the game.

Q. How about adding a practice mode?

A. Games that typically have a training mode tend to be fairly long overall, often the kind where you save and continue partway through, and such modes are usually meant for games with controls too complex to just jump straight into the main experience.

Front Line, on the other hand, is designed around playing from the very start each time, with a short-session structure that ends the moment you die, and it isn't the kind of game where items or new abilities accumulate over time, so it doesn't fit the model of "practice beforehand, then play the main game once you've improved."

Even if a training mode were added, it would barely differ from the main game itself, and simply playing the main game repeatedly already serves as more than enough training.

Q. How about applying body-part damage to weapons other than the sniper rifle?

A. Body-part damage only means something for a weapon like the sniper rifle, precisely because it's polarized between an instant kill and almost no effect at all. Given how small the enemy characters are in this game, body-part damage that merely varies the amount of damage would demand more effort to aim for than it's worth, so we consider it essentially meaningless.

Q. How about letting players buy equipment like body armor with supply points?

A. Spending points to boost your defense would give you far too much of an advantage and remove the thrill.

Being able to buy defense whenever you like is effectively the same as recovering health at will,

and it could remove the sense of urgency to reach the next supply drop quickly.

It's also precisely because enemy shotguns and enemy snipers deal high damage per hit that prioritizing them over other enemies is a meaningful strategy — and that strategic depth would also be diluted.

Q. How about having enemy troops rappel down from a helicopter on a rope?

A. That would barely differentiate itself from the current paratroopers, and

I think paratroopers dropping in with no regard for left or right on the screen already provide more thrill.

If enemies only descended from one fixed point, clearing them out (even if you did it quickly) shouldn't be all that difficult.

Q. How about having supply crates disappear after a set amount of time?

A. If the idea behind having supplies disappear is meant as a countermeasure against the technique of leaving a supply crate off to the side and farming points nearby, I don't think it would be very effective.

Supply crates appear every 100 meters. If you make it so points can't be farmed because the crate vanishes unless you grab it quickly, a player could simply fight it out at the 99-meter or 199-meter mark, and once their health gets low, advance just 1 meter to trigger a fresh supply drop, which would let them farm points the same way regardless.

Q. How about having supply crates drop at a fixed time?

A. Having supplies drop at a set time, and needing to advance in time to catch them, is an interesting idea in itself, but much like adding a time limit, it would turn the game into something driven heavily by the clock, making it harder for each player's individual playstyle to come through, so I'd rather not go that route.

Personally, games that rush the player tend to stress me out, so it's just not something I care for.

Q. How about having enemy helicopter attacks also damage enemy soldiers?

A. That would actually make things safer whenever a helicopter is present.

As it stands, there's a real chance of getting shot from behind by enemy soldiers while you're busy defending against a helicopter's attack, and I think that keeps the tension higher than the alternative would.

Q. How about adding actions like jumping or crouching?

A. Jumping doesn't really fit the setting, so we have no plans to add it.

It would feel far too unnatural for someone on a battlefield to be dodging bullets by jumping. Going prone or crawling would fit the battlefield atmosphere well, but as a defensive option it wouldn't differ much from the current "shield," and on top of that, it would remove the risk of having to choose which side to defend. Likewise, being able to fire while prone would be far too advantageous and would throw off the game's balance.

Q. How about having some item or explosion alter the terrain?

A. Even if a new item were added, I doubt many players would go out of their way to use it purely to reshape the ground.

On top of that, if the terrain ends up with more than one step in height difference,

the protagonist and enemies would no longer be able to climb it.

Adding a climbing action would slow down the game's pacing due to the time it takes to climb.

Q. How about having friendly troops appear?

A. Balancing the game for both "protagonist alone" and "protagonist with allies" at the same time is extremely difficult.

Adding allies risks making the game too easy if it's not tuned carefully,

but tuning it to feel right with allies present would make it far too harsh when playing solo.

Since that tension hasn't been resolved, we haven't implemented it.

Sound Effects Provided By

WEB WAVE LIB

(<http://www.s-t-t.com/wwl/>)

BGM Provided By

TAM Music Factory

(<http://www.tam-music.com/>)

Additional Graphics Assistance

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