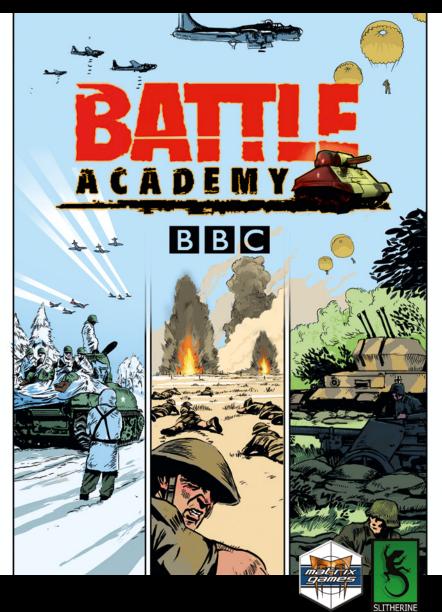# EPILEPSY WARNING

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Certain individuals may experience epileptic seizures or loss of consciousness when subjected to strong, flashing lights for long periods of time. Such individuals may therefore experience a seizure while operating computer or video games. This can also affect individuals who have no prior medical record of epilepsy or have never previously experienced a seizure.

If you or any family member has ever experienced epilepsy symptoms (seizures or loss of consciousness) after exposure to flashing lights, please consult your doctor before playing this game.

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PRECAUTIONS DURING USE:

- Do not sit too close to the monitor.
- Sit as far as comfortably possible.
- Use as small a monitor as possible.
- Do not play when tired or short on sleep.
- Take care that there is sufficient lighting in the room.
- Be sure to take a break of 10-15 minutes every hour.

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CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Battle Academy!

Battle Academy is the first in a series of fast paced, turn based tactical games inspired by a game concept devised by the BBC. Set during World War II, Battle Academy delivers an exciting and approachable game with hidden depths, accessible for beginners and intriguing for experts. Players can face the mighty Afrika Korps in the deserts of North Africa in 1941, direct the Allies as they smash through German defences in Normandy, or fight the Battle of the Bulge as US forces resist the Germans' desperate offensive.

The team at Slitherine worked with Professor John Buckley, Military Historian at the University of Wolverhampton and a keen war gamer himself, to make sure that the strategy, tactics, scenarios and available firepower of the battles fought in WW2 were turned into realistic AI behaviour, powering expertly crafted battles.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM SPEC

Windows® XP/Vista
Pentium 4 or equivalent
512Mb RAM (XP) or 1GB RAM (Vista)
128Mb DirectX video card
DVD ROM Drive (not required for the digital version)
DirectX Compatible Sound Card
DirectX 9.0c or higher (included in installer)

RECOMMENDED SPEC

1GB RAM
256Mb DirectX 9 video card with shader model 2.0 or better

Please ensure your graphics and sound drivers are up to date before playing the game or you may experience graphical glitches or more serious errors. Check your manufacturer's website for the latest version, as new drivers are released regularly.

GETTING STARTED

Once you have installed the game you'll need to run it! When you run the game you'll see a small launcher window. This allows you to set your resolution and graphical options before starting the game. This box appears every time you run, so to change your settings just quit out and try again.

The left window contains some useful game links, including a link to the support forums should you encounter any problems. There are also links to the latest patches, as well as the general forum for hints and tips, or just to brag about your victories!

PLAYING THE GAME

In Battle Academy you are in charge of a force of Allied or Axis soldiers during World War II. You'll decide when to advance, retreat, hide, shoot, and ambush. If you say jump, the only question you'll get from your men is "How high Sir!".

You can play a single player campaign, go in to multiplayer and try your luck against the online community or even design your own single or multiplayer scenarios with the editor.

CAMPAIGN SELECTION

Initially you should play the tutorial campaign to familiarise yourself with the controls and game mechanics. After this, you'll move on to North Africa in 1941, where the German & Italian forces under Rommel take on the British 8th Army. The action then moves to Normandy in 1944, with the D-Day landings by Allied troops. Finally, you'll face a fierce onslaught as the US troops battle the enemy and the cold in the Battle of the Bulge.

Any user designed campaigns will also appear here and can be selected and played.

SCENARIO SELECTION

Once you have selected a campaign, you'll see a story panel describing the upcoming mission. You can page left to review at missions you have already completed or even replay them to try and complete all the achievements. The most recent mission is always on the right.

FORCE SELECTION

After selecting a mission, you'll be taken to the force selection screen. Initially your units will be picked for you but later missions may give you "force requisition points" to purchase extra troops to accompany you. Each unit's stats are shown, along with a basic text description.

Notice the stars at the bottom of the screen. These represent the achievements for a mission. You can complete a mission and progress through the game without achieving these, but to win all the medals you need to achieve all the objectives, some of which are very, very tough.

MISSION BRIEFING

After you've selected your forces you'll see the detailed mission briefing. This is shown on a map detailing where your forces are, the main enemy positions and what the objective for the mission.

DEPLOYMENT

If the mission is a defensive one, you may be given the chance to reposition your troops in deployment mode.

In deployment mode you can drag units to any visible tile, although bear in mind that tanks can't be dragged in to buildings. You can also set unit's initial facings and put them in ambush mode by telling them to Hold Fire.

Once you're happy with the starting positions of your troops, you can start the battle.

THE BATTLEFIELD

The battlefield is split in to square tiles. Each unit occupies a tile. Units move in tile increments and never end part way between tiles.

Buildings, forests and hills block line of sight, so set your fire positions up carefully. You will only see enemy units on tiles you have line of sight to and that are within spotting range. Tiles you cannot see into are darkened within the shroud.

Once you start the battle, you can only reposition your troops by moving them, using up their action points. When a unit is selected, all the tiles it can move to are highlighted. Also, most units will have the option to "Move Fast" or "Hunt". Moving fast gets to the destination quicker but makes you much less accurate if you attempt to shoot that turn. When hunting, you move slower but have no accuracy penalties and are more likely to sneak up on enemy tanks and get off the first shot.

Some of the main actions a unit can perform when selected are listed below:

» **Fire AP & Fire HE** - When targeting an enemy unit you can shoot at it IF you can see it, are in range, and have shots remaining. Each remaining shot is shown by a bullet symbol on the unit panel.

» **Loading/Unloading** – To load a unit onto a transport you must be adjacent to the transport and have enough movement points remaining. Once loaded, the unit moves with the transport until you choose to unload it, or until the transport is destroyed. To Unload a unit, select the transport and select an adjacent tile to unload to. You cannot unload through hedges or in to terrain you cannot move through. Support weapons, such as mortars, heavy machine guns and anti-tank guns cannot move alone and must be loaded onto a transport.

» **Turn** – Select an adjacent tile and the unit will turn towards it. Facing is very important as units are better at reacting to enemies to their front. Also most vehicles have their strongest armour at the front. Always try to approach enemies from the side or rear.

» **Hold Fire** – When selected, select the unit again to Hold Fire. Units holding fire will not engage enemy units unless they have been attacked. Units automatically stop holding fire when they shoot. Holding fire is very important when defending. You must take the best shot, not the first shot. Wait until the enemy is close and your initial attack will be more effective. Surprise is your key advantage. Give away your position too soon and you'll pay dearly.

» **Assault** – Infantry can assault enemies on adjacent tiles if they have enough action points remaining and have not already attacked. Assaults are much more intense than normal attacks and can result in heavier casualties. If the attacker wins they take the enemy position and the defender is destroyed. If the assault fails the attacker takes high casualties. Assaults are very useful against heavy fortifications because the units inside these structures are very resilient and do not surrender easily.

» **Overrun** – Veteran Tanks can use this attack against adjacent infantry in open terrain. The infantry have one chance to knock out the tank before it reaches them and they are destroyed.

» **Flame** – Some units are equipped with flamethrowers and can make flame attacks. These are very short ranged but can be lethal, especially against un-armoured targets.

» **Bombard** – Certain units, such as Mortars or Howitzers, are capable of indirect fire, able to fire at any tile within their range. Target the enemy unit and a small barrage is called down on them.

» **Suppress** – Units can shoot into terrain that provides cover, even if they cannot see an enemy unit, in case an enemy is hidden there. Whilst inaccurate, this fire can often suppress the enemy so they cannot return fire.

» **Bulldoze** – Wrecks slow down vehicles and can be removed by bulldozing. It uses up a number of action points to do this.

» **Sniper** – when a unit becomes Elite it gains new skills. Sniper is one of those skills. Snipers always hit their target and are never revealed, but sniping takes up the unit's full turn.

There are a number of key aspects to Battle Academy you always need to consider:

» **Combat & Damage** – there are no health bars in Battle Academy. As in the real world, if a man is hit, it means he is too badly wounded to fight or dead, but either way he is out of the battle. If a tank is hit, the shot either bounces off it's armour or it penetrates inside and the tank is knocked out. Small arms are ineffective against tanks - you cannot shoot a machine gun at a tank and slowly wear it down. . This is an important thing to remember.

» **Morale** – your men do not fight to the death. Every time a unit is shot at its morale drops. When their morale drops below 50 they are suppressed and will not fire their weapons. When their morale drops to 0, they will surrender if shot at by an enemy on an adjacent tile. Once their morale drops to -100, they will rout and never recover. Morale recovers if the unit goes through an entire turn without suffering any morale loss. It pays to retreat suppressed units to let them recover.

» **Experience** – as units make kills, they gain experience and advance to Veteran or Elite status. The rank is shown by the icon above a unit. Veteran units gain 25 extra morale points, and Elite gain 50. Some units also gain new skills such as extra shots, sniper mode, faster movement, so it pays to use these powerful units wisely.

» **Armour** – Almost all tanks have their heaviest armour to the front and weakest to the rear. The thicker the armour, the harder the unit is to destroy.

» **Cover & Terrain** – Each type of terrain has different effects. Vehicles can only enter clear terrain. Infantry can hide in non-clear terrain. The % damage reduction for units on that tile is shown on the tooltip. The higher the number the more protection the terrain offers. Some terrain, such as trees and buildings, block Line Of Sight (LOS) and any tiles behind them are hidden. Units on top of hills can see down, but are hidden from units at ground level until they open fire.

» **Airstrikes, Bombardments & Bonuses –** On some missions you'll see icons at the bottom left of the display. These allow you to call in fighter-bombers, or bomber or artillery strikes. Note that there is delay between these strikes being called in and their arrival. Be sure to plan where the enemy will be when the strike lands, not where they are now. Fighter bombers are called in on a specific tile by clicking on the fighter-bomber icon, then selecting the target. Fighter bombers will attack the nearest enemy they find to the target tile, so you do not need to spot on. Bombers and artillery strikes hit an area around the target tile. Each type of bombardment varies in weight of fire and area of effect, right up to the devastating naval bombardment or B17 squadron. Be very careful how you use these awesome weapons! Finally, you have the medic and drill sergeant. The medic heals up one wounded man in a squad and the drill sergeant upgrades a regular unit a veteran. All of these actions must recharge before they can be used again.

» **Ambush –** when a hidden enemy unit shoots, there is a chance it will reveal itself. If this happens you'll see the unit appear and Spotted will be shown over the unit.

SHORTCUT KEYS

M – toggles the overhead map view

TAB – cycles through units which have not moved yet this turn.

ESC – opens the menu.

J – Toggles the mini map

F2 – takes a screenshot and dumps it to My Docs\My Games\BBCBA

1 – Shows the tiles the current unit can see and which ones it can shoot.

Shift – when using the bombard command this shows the spread area for the bombard attack.

ACHIEVEMENTS

As well as completing the mission, all missions have a number of achievements to attempt. These are extra, tougher objectives that only advanced players will be able to complete. They are varied and can include such things as capturing all the Victory locations to limiting your casualties or achieving your objective in a shorter time. The achievements add replay value to the single player missions.

BATTLE REPORTS

When a mission is won (or lost!), you get a report of the battle. This shows you information about how many squads you lost, how many the enemy lost and any achievements you completed or failed.

LOAD/SAVE

You can save your progress during your turn on the Battlefield or from within the Scenario Selection screen. You cannot save during the enemy turn. When you exit the game your progress is also automatically saved.

Saved games are either located in "My Documents\My Games\BBCBA" folder or "Documents\My Games\GBM" depending upon your operating system.

You can load your saved game from the main menu or when on the Battlefield.

EDITOR

The game includes the editor we used to build all the scenarios so you can do anything we can do. From the main menu select Editor and if you have not already created a campaign do so. You'll then be taken to a blank map. The toolbar on the left lets you change terrain tiles, overlay roads and various other terrain types. You can place objects such as buildings, bridges, hedges and walls. You can place units for both sides. Placing units ion top of another unit mean the 2nd unit is loaded on board. You can set AI points and battle groups which can be combined with mission scripts to create a very detailed AI plans. You can control the nationality for each side from US, British, Canadian, Polish, and Italian & German. You can add airstrikes, bombardments, medics and drill sergeants. You can set the amount of force points the player can bring to the scenario. Basically you can create single and multiplayer scenarios of any size and complexity you like.

SOME USEFUL SHORTCUT KEYS

R – Rotates the current unit or object 90 degrees.

Pg Up/Pg Down – free rotation of the selected object.

Home/End – scale up/down the size of the selected object.

F – toggles whether a unit is Fixed (free) or optional (bought on the force selection screen)

DEL – when holding down Delete a left click will remove a loaded unit and then the unit itself.

SHIFT – when holding Shift you can drag units around.

For more help creating maps visit the Battle Academy scenario design forum at www.slitherine.com/forum.

MULTIPLAYER

Battle Academy includes a very comprehensive and easy to use multi-player system. To reach it, select Multiplayer from the main game menu. If you already have a Slitherine forum username or have previously played other multiplayer games on our server, choose the login option and enter your details. If you are new to Slitherine, register your username and password in game. You can use these details to log in to the Slitherine forum and view stats or chat to other players.

The revolutionary PBEM (Play by E-Mail) system does not require you to organise games in advance; you do not even need to be online at the same time as your opponent. It is as simple to play as a single player game, removing all the barriers to entry of other multiplayer games. It really needs to be tried to be believed!

When you arrive in the Lobby, you'll see 3 tabs. The first tab, "My Games", lists any games you currently have going. The middle tab is how you issue a challenge to start a new game, while the third lets you view any challenges from other players looking to start a game. You can accept these to get playing.

Any games displaying a padlock icon are private challenges only available to specific opponents.

If you want to start your own challenge, click the "Issue Challenge" button and you'll see a list of available scenarios. Select the one you wish to play then select your side.

Once you have an opponent, the game moves to "My Games". If it is your turn you'll be able to select the game and press Play. If not, you'll have to wait for your opponent to take their turn.

When your opponent has moved you'll be notified by e-mail. It is very important that you enter your real e-mail address when registering or you will not see the e-mail alerts when it is your turn.

USEFUL INFO, TIPS AND TACTICS

» Infantry and support weapons can hide in cover and can only be spotted by enemy infantry on an adjacent tile. The scout unit can see enemies hiding in cover from two tiles away so are very useful when trying to discover the locations of enemy units.

» Loading & unloading a unit on a transport takes half a turn.

» Support weapons cannot shoot in the turn they unload and cannot load if they have previously fired.

- » Certain units have bombardment weapons which take multiple turns to reload – e.g. the Panzerwerfer and the Sherman Calliope.
- » Infantry that come under fire while moving will immediately halt so be careful you do not get caught in the open.
- » Certain units, such as the M16 AA Half track or the MkIV AA tank, have anti-aircraft capabilities. Place these near your units to give them protection from low level fighter bombers.
- » When an enemy unit fires from ambush, you won't see the actual position of the unit. The Ambush text appears near the unit's position but not necessarily on the exact tile.
- » In some missions, visibility can be reduced by a sandstorm or darkness. Use your infantry and open topped vehicles longer sighting ranges to spot enemy units before your tanks become vulnerable to ambush.
- » Make good use of combined arms. Your tanks are blind in towns and forests without infantry support.
- » Suppressing an enemy is almost as good as killing them. As long as you keep a unit under fire it will not recover its morale, so focus on unsuppressed units as they are more of a threat.
- » It is tougher to attack than defend. Remember to attack where you have the advantage and defend where you are outnumbered.
- » Infantry should not always defend at the front of a village. Sometimes it can be best to pull back to avoid long range enemy fire from tanks and support weapons and draw them into constricted areas where they are more vulnerable to short range ambush.

MODDING

The game has been designed from the ground up to be moddable. It gives an unprecedented level of control to you.

USEFUL SHORTCUT KEYS

- » F3 Debug Current Unit script
- » F4 Debug AI script
- » F5 Debug scenario script
- » F6 Toggles script log window
- » Shift+F7 - Toggles extra AI info mode.

For help modding and creating scenario scripts please visit the Battle Academy modding forum at www.slitherine.com/forum.

SUPPORT

The launcher screen has links to the technical support forum. If you are having trouble with these, just go to www.slitherine.com and post your question or problem. Please remember to tell us as much information about your problem as possible and include your machines specs and operating system.

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Special thanks to all the beta testers who help to make this a great game. There are too many to mention here. We really appreciate all the time you spent playing the game and reporting bugs.

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