TRIBES 2

2

CRUCIAL MAPS!

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TRIBES 2 ™

Prima's Official Strategy Guide

Joe Grant Bell

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Senior Product Manager: Jennifer Crotteau
Senior Project Editor: Christy L. Curtis
Editorial Assistant: Terri Stewart Bloom

Important:

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1

An Introduction to TRIBES 2

TRIBES was a unique and innovative game. It provided a multiplayer environment geared toward teamwork rather than individualism, and introduced a complex game world containing more than just players with guns. Elaborate sensor networks, unmanned turrets, spy cameras, flying vehicles…it was undeniably ambitious.

TRIBES 2 is a continuation of the original game—bigger, better, and more refined. It introduces new weapons and vehicles, and optimizes some of the play mechanics of the original. The world is still complex, and that's where this guide comes in handy.

How TRIBES is Different

Just because you've played other multiplayer games doesn't mean you can leap into TRIBES 2 and immediately succeed. Here's a look at the main differences between TRIBES 2 and other multiplayer action games.

Complex Game World

Fig. 1-1. The game world encompasses more than other players.

In most action games, there's not much to learn. Every player is more or less the same, except for

the weapons he or she carries. The game world isn't particularly interactive. Your only threats are other human players.

TRIBES 2 is different. Players wear three kinds of armor and a wide variety of armor packs and belt gear. The landscape is dotted with important features: inventory stations that let you change armor and gear; powerful vehicles such as the Beowulf assault vehicle; and pulse sensor arrays that detect you and place you on the enemy sensor network. (Understanding the ins and outs of the sensor network is a task in itself.)

TRIBES 2 may be an action game, but it has the difficulty and depth of a simulation. It'll take a while for you to become accustomed to the game environment; this guide will help.

Team Play

Fig. 1-2. Teamwork is vital in many TRIBES 2 games.

It's possible to play Deathmatch-style games with TRIBES 2, but the most popular games are team-oriented.

If you don't acknowledge your teammates, you probably won't get far, even if you have good combat skills. On the other hand, if you're a good team player, you can compensate for poor combat skills. Team play cuts both ways.

Sometimes team play forces you to play in an unfavorable way. For example, if your team has decided to be gung ho and attack the enemy base without leaving any opponent defenders behind, you may be forced to play defense (if you want to win).

On the other hand, this may be what you want. Even if you aren't the best at direct combat, you may enjoy setting traps for the enemy. Laying down a careful network of motion sensors, spider-clamp turrets, and mines can be just as rewarding, if not more so, than blasting the enemy with a spinfusor.

Learn to be versatile and play various roles, and you'll enjoy TRIBES 2 much more.

Variation
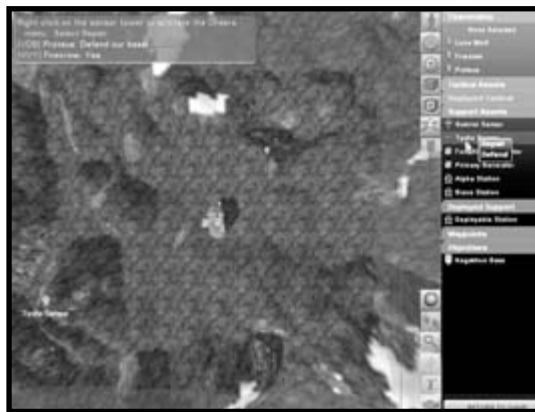
Fig. 1-3. The numerous maps DO make a difference in how the game is played.

TRIBES 2 ships with 47 maps, and more are likely to appear after the game's release. Figure in eight major game types and a number of smaller variables, and you've got a tremendous amount of variety. To master TRIBES 2 you must learn to be flexible and adapt your style of play to fit the current scenario.

This guide will help you learn appropriate styles of play for each major game type.

Challenge

TRIBES 2 is challenging, even if you have excellent reflexes. The exact level of challenge depends on your teammates' and enemies' skills.

When you start, anyone with experience will be able to defeat you; later, you'll come into your own. But no matter how good you get, the level of challenge remains consistently high. The people who play TRIBES 2 thrive on competition, and many are highly dedicated. You'll need every bit of information in this guide, plus a lot of practice, to reach a level where you can consistently challenge them.

Fig. 1-4. Expect to get blown up a lot.

Changes from Tribes

Fig. 1-5. New weapons and vehicles are some of the changes from the original TRIBES.

Those who have played TRIBES will undoubtedly wonder what the main differences are between TRIBES and TRIBES 2. Here's a list of major gameplay changes.

◆ All-new vehicles, some of which are very powerful. Check out the Jericho forward base in Chapter 4!

◆ New weapons, including a missile launcher and shocklance.

◆ New packs, like the cloaking pack and remote detonation satchel pack.

◆ Changed pack functionality. The armor pack, for example, holds two repair kits instead of one. You can carry two deployable motion sensors at once.

◆ More threats to players who jet too much, including the new antiaircraft turret and the aforementioned missile launcher.

◆ Ability to replace the turrets at your base with a different kind of turret.

◆ Elimination of a few inventory items like the deployable ammo station and deployable sensor jammer.

◆ Enhanced inventory stations. Now you make your selections beforehand and just run across the inventory station, instead of choosing at the station and holding up your teammates.

◆ Better game balance, especially in terms of weapon and armor power.

◆ Elimination of certain tricks (e.g., mines now have a longer arming period, so you can't throw them and shoot a disc at them for a quick kill).

There are other differences, many subtle. As you play the game you'll learn what has carried over from the original TRIBES and what hasn't.

Using This Guide

This guide is designed to help you get through your early games and become a competent TRIBES 2 player. But to benefit from the information, you first need to know where to find it. Here's a look:

◆ Chapter 1 is what you're reading now.

◆ Chapter 2 discusses weapons and armor. It provides a thorough description of each item and strategies on how to use it.

◆ Chapter 3 examines packs and belt gear, and discusses how you can use them to improve your game.

◆ Chapter 4 reviews team assets and vehicles. You'll learn how to fly Shrikes and Thunderswords, and gain insight into the major assets (such as turrets and inventory stations) that you'll deal with in most games.

◆ Chapter 5 discusses combat, providing tips and tactics.

Fig. 1-6. It's a big, complex game. The more you read, the more you'll learn.

◆ Chapter 6 explains key game concepts, like the sensor network, and helps you translate those concepts into better play.

◆ Chapter 7 puts everything you've learned to this point into practice and walks you through the single-player training missions.

◆ Chapter 8 provides detailed tips on surviving your first few multiplayer games.

◆ Chapter 9 gives specific strategies for individualistic game types, such as Bounty and Deathmatch.

◆ Chapter 10 provides strategies for team game types, such as Capture the Flag and Capture & Hold.

◆ Chapter 11 looks at the maps provided with TRIBES 2, showing where the important items are and what game types you can play on them.

Getting Started in Tribes

Here are some tips that will prepare you for your first battle.

Read the Manual

Step one is to read the game manual. This might sound obvious, but many game players like to leap right in and play. That works just fine in simple action games, but it's a bad idea in TRIBES 2—especially if you're playing against highly skilled opponents who don't give you time to think and learn.

Before playing, therefore, skim the manual and try to get at least a general sense of what the game is about. It'll be hard to cram everything into your brain right away, since you won't have any playing experiences to relate the information to, but it'll provide a framework of understanding that's useful when you fire up the game.

While you're at it, you can look at Chapters 1 through 7 of this guide.

Play the Training Missions

Fig. 1-7. The training missions are pretty challenging, and they'll get you started on the right track.

The next step is to play the single-player training missions included with TRIBES 2. Again, this may seem obvious—but as with the game manual, training missions tend to be overlooked by experienced (or impatient) game players. Play through all of the training missions at the default

difficulty level, and beat them. Make sure that you understand what you did to win.

> **TIP**
>
> Normally you should beat all the training missions at hard difficulty, but hard difficulty is really hard in Tribes 2. In this case, winning at medium difficulty is enough.

As you play the training missions, you'll find yourself asking any number of questions: What's that thing on the ground? What sort of turret am I looking at? Why can't I get inside that base? Refer to both the manual and the first seven chapters of this guide as you play through these missions. Although chapter 7 contains detailed information on the training missions, Chapters 1–6 also apply to the challenges you'll face.

> **TIP**
>
> As you play the training missions, pay particular attention to your movement. Moving around quickly is a critical part of success in Tribes 2.

Finish Reading Chapters 1–7

If you haven't finished the first seven chapters of this guide by the time you've completed the training missions, read them now.

Even if you've already read them, feel free to skim through again. You're likely to learn more this time, because now you can relate the information you read about to actual gameplay experiences.

Read Chapter 8, then Play Online

Next, read Chapter 8, go online, and play a few games. Refer to the game manual for information on how to do this.
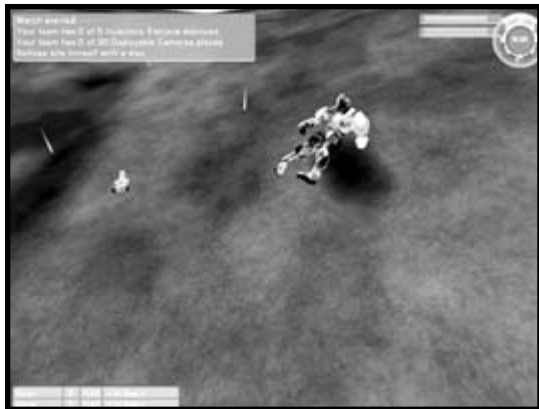
Fig. 1-8. Your first few games will probably be discouraging. Don't give up!

As you play online, expect to be confused. Don't worry about contributing to the team effort—in fact, don't worry about anything. Just try different weapons, explore the map, and, above all, try to observe. Watch what other players are doing.

After playing a couple of discouraging games, you might be tempted to call it quits. Don't even think about it! You played those games to gain a bit of experience. The more experience you have, the easier it is to grasp the concepts explained in the game manual and this guide.

Read More of This Guide

Now that you've played through the single-player missions and tasted multiplayer combat, sit down and read the rest of this guide. How much or how little you read depends on your personal tastes, but all of the information will help make you a better player.

To the Action!

Without further ado, let's get on with the guide. There's a lot of information to digest, so take it slowly and remember: It takes time to master TRIBES 2. Stick with it, and you WILL improve.

2
Armor & Weapons

This chapter examines the armor and weapons of TRIBES 2. The numerous options can be overwhelming at first. However, this roster comments on each item's strengths and weaknesses, including tips on when to use it.

Armor is discussed first, since it determines the number and type of weapons you can carry.

ARMOR

All three armor types perform certain common functions. Each protects you, gives you access to important displays such as the command circuit, and has jump-jets that allow you to travel quickly. Despite these common traits, each armor type possesses distinct characteristics.

Scout Armor

Speed: High
Protection: Low
Max. Weapon Load: 3

Fig. 2-1. Scout armor is all about speed.
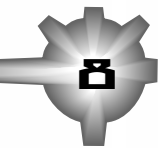
Scout armor is the default armor type you spawn and respawn into. It is the sports car of armors. It's small, fast, and exhilarating, but it affords very little protection. It can't carry many weapons, so be selective when you wear this armor.

You might wonder why anyone would bother with Scout armor. After all, the heavier armor types provide more weapons and better protection, so you'd think they'd be better for combat. That's not at all the case. Mobility is crucial in TRIBES 2, and Scout armor provides that in spades. Scout armor lets you run faster than the other armor types, and its jump-jets carry you MUCH higher. Sure, you're vulnerable in Scout armor, but your speed lets you pick and choose your fights and evade shots that would otherwise hit you.
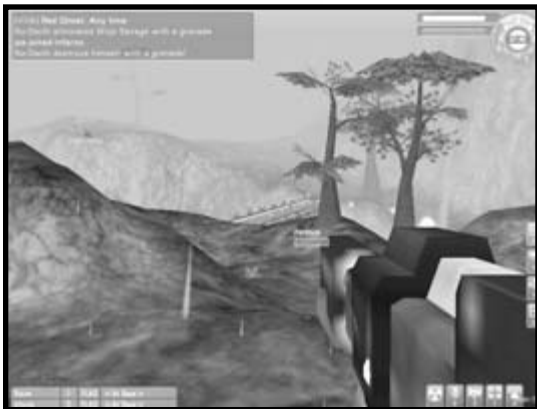
Fig. 2-2. Flag runners, snipers, and sneaky players all prefer Scout armor.

Think of it this way: several hits from any weapon will put you in bad shape. It's better to evade shots than absorb them. In certain cases you can be effective despite taking lots of punishment (with the shield pack, for example), but by and large you want to be someplace else when the bullets start to fly. Scout armor allows you to spend more time in the air than on the ground, making you extremely hard to hit.

Players wearing Scout armor and toting the energy pack may carry the laser rifle. While only

the Scout-armored players can take this deadly long-range sniper's weapon, they can't carry deployable turrets, inventory stations, or use the fusion mortar and missile launcher. Also, Scout armor is the only class capable of using the cloaking pack.

TIP

Scout armor is the only armor type that can pilot every single vehicle. Assault armor is slightly restricted (for example, it can't pilot the Wildcat grav cycle), and Juggernaut armor can't pilot any vehicles at all. Would-be pilots should choose Scout armor.

The value of the Scout armor's mobility can't be overstated. Heavier armor types can be slow and unwieldy, whereas Scout armor is ideal for speed. Scout armor wearers have more movement options than heavier armor wearers. For example, when assaulting a multilevel base, Scout armor wearers can fly up to the roof and drop down inside the base. Heavier armor wearers have more trouble jetting that far (depending on the map) and are sometimes forced to enter through lower portals.

Scout armor is ideal for the following roles:

◆ Sniper: Only Scout armor can have the laser rifle.

◆ Flag runner: Fast players can grab the enemy flag and get away quickly.

◆ Assassin/stealth player: Players in Scout armor with a cloaking pack can move quickly, without being seen.

◆ Anyone who wants to excel at high-flying outdoor combat.

◆ Any role that requires speed or mobility.

Scout armor functions best outdoors, where the wearer can jet around freely. It's weakest indoors, where movement is confined. Consider the terrain before selecting an armor type.

Assault Armor

Fig. 2-3. Assault armor provides a good mix of speed and durability.

Fig. 2-4. You can pilot many vehicle types while wearing Assault armor.

Speed: Average
Protection: Average
Max. Weapon Load: 4

Assault armor is suitable for most tasks: you can defend a base, lay down turrets and sensors, attack the enemy, and pilot most vehicles.

> **TIP**
>
> Assault armor wearers can carry any weapon except the laser rifle and fusion mortar. They can also carry any pack.

On defense, Assault armor is a good choice for active players. If you're only guarding a very small, enclosed area, Juggernaut armor works best. However, if you plan to patrol or lay down a grid of landspike turrets and motion sensors, Assault armor provides greater mobility.

> **TIP**
>
> A great way to set up quick base defenses is to use Assault armor and a deployable inventory station. Deploy the inventory station in a convenient location, then return frequently for landspike turrets, spider-clamp turrets, and various sensors.
>
> Assault armor works best for this, since you can't carry all the necessary gear wearing Scout armor, and Juggernaut armor slows you down.

On offense, Assault armor proves just as useful. It's tough enough to take a beating, but you'll still be mobile enough to get to and from the enemy base easily.

All things considered, there are very few times when you should actively avoid Assault armor. For an activity that requires extreme mobility, use Scout armor. Pure snatch-and-grab flag raids and sniper missions also require Scout armor. If you're playing a defensive role that just involves blocking a corridor, physically guarding a flag, or occupying a small structure all by yourself, then Juggernaut armor is the way to go.

Learn to use Assault armor, and respect its blend of abilities. Though it lacks the specialized power of Scout and Juggernaut armor, it also lacks those armors' disadvantages.

Juggernaut Armor

Fig. 2-5. Juggernaut armor is slow, but it carries heavy loads and takes a beating.

Fig. 2-6. Everyone must respect the power of the fusion mortar, carried only by Juggernaut armor.

Speed: Low
Protection: High
Max. Weapon Load: 4

Juggernaut armor is deceptive. It can be very powerful, but it's also the most limited armor type. While it can carry the potent fusion mortar (and any other weapons or equipment you can think of, except for the laser rifle), it's slow, and the wearer cannot pilot any vehicles. It takes more experience to use Juggernaut armor properly than any other armor type.

A lone player in Juggernaut armor walking across an open landscape is vulnerable to skilled players in Scout or Assault armor. The Juggernaut armor wearer can't run or jump fast enough to get away from these enemies, and he or she certainly can't pursue effectively. This allows Scout- or Assault-armored foes to fight on their own terms, sniping at the Juggernaut-armor wearer from great distances, hiding whenever it's convenient, and running away whenever it suits them. The Juggernaut also has slow-charging jump-jets, making getting into the air difficult—and that's the safest place to be.

Wear the Juggernaut armor for roles that place you in enclosed spaces and don't require

much movement. Indoor areas are ideal for Juggernaut armor, because mobility is less useful there. Defensive roles also suit Juggernauts, so position yourself well, or enemies will run right past you.

If you wear Juggernaut armor in the open field, take friends along. They can spot for your fusion mortar with their targeting lasers, and they can defend you from lightly armored foes who would otherwise pick you apart from long range. Also, if one of your comrades has a repair pack, he or she can repair your armor—that makes you even harder to kill.

Even better, hitch a ride on vehicles instead of walking across open terrain. Several players in Juggernaut armor on a Havoc Transport can be a deadly sight indeed—especially if they have their fusion mortars out.

> **TIP**
>
> Learn the ropes in Scout armor or Assault armor, then switch to Juggernaut armor when you're acquainted with the game. The lighter armors are fragile, but Juggernaut armor's sluggish speed is more likely to frustrate the beginner.

Primary Weapons

Every weapon in TRIBES 2 has a use, though some weapons are more specialized than others. Learning how weapons perform and how to capitalize on their strengths, as well as avoid their weaknesses, is integral to mastering the game.

Blaster

Fig. 2-7. The blaster isn't an overpowering weapon, but it's useful at extreme range.

The blaster is a specialized weapon, handy in certain situations but inappropriate for others. It works underwater, and its shots also bounce off walls, allowing you to harass enemies around corners. However, the blaster isn't useful in the typical outdoor fight.

> **TIP**
>
> The blaster's energy-based power source makes it a good backup weapon but a poor main one. You'll never run out of blaster ammo, but while you're using it, you consume energy that could power a shield pack or jump-jets instead.

Players wearing Scout armor are unlikely to want the blaster, especially if they already have the laser rifle. The laser rifle is more powerful, its beam covers great distances instantly, and it's harder to trace back to the source. But for Assault or Juggernaut armor wearers, the blaster functions as sort of a poor man's laser rifle. The blaster fires quickly enough to force a Scout-armored enemy to move and dodge, thus buying time for heavier armor types to move to better ground.

The blaster also ignores the shield pack, so it's a great weapon for taking down shielded Juggernauts. For the same reason, it's also very effective in taking out enemy equipment. Although it doesn't do much damage, it effectively chews up shielding.

How much you use the blaster depends on your style of play. Even if you don't like it for regular combat, it's a useful way to participate in long-range fights, even while wearing heavier armor.

Chaingun

The chaingun is a good addition to your arsenal. It's one of the more generally useful weapons in the game.

The chaingun spews a constant stream of hot lead in the general direction it's pointed. While

Fig. 2-8. The chaingun quickly finishes off enemies at close range.

accurate at close range and medium-close range, the chaingun's scattered bullets are completely ineffective at long range. Put away the chaingun when facing distant enemies, regardless of what armor your target is wearing and how fast he or she is moving.

At relatively close range, the chaingun shreds enemies quickly. Nothing can withstand a steady stream of chaingun fire. Better yet, since there's no splash damage (as with the plasma rifle and spinfusor), you can mow down an opponent at point-blank range. Very few weapons rival the chaingun for short-range power.

Several weapons work well at close range. Should you use the spinfusor, the plasma rifle, or the chaingun? If your opponent jumps around and spends more time in the sky than on the ground, the chaingun is a great weapon. The chaingun is also a good choice for finishing off damaged enemies. If they're on the ground and you're in the sky, you might prefer a weapon with splash damage, like the spinfusor.

TIP

Some players switch weapons mid-battle. They use the chaingun while dueling a jumping opponent, then switch to an explosive weapon like a grenade launcher when the enemy is about to hit the ground.

The bottom line: If you're skilled at staying close to the enemy while avoiding return fire, the chaingun is an excellent weapon. If you're not so sure of your aim, stick with the spinfusor. The chaingun is useful in most situations and at its best when you're fighting hard-to-hit airborne opponents.

Electron Flux Projector (ELF Projector)

Fig. 2-09. The ELF projector works best when you've got a friend with you.

The ELF projector is even more specialized than the laser rifle. It drains the energy out of your target—be it a human enemy or an object such as a turret—and deals slight damage in the meantime. It also "grabs" at human enemies, preventing them from escaping.

Since the ELF deals minimal damage and is fairly short-ranged, it's best in conjunction with teammates or other weapons. For example, let's say that you and a friend, both in Scout armor, want to destroy a plasma turret. One of you can activate a sensor jammer pack, approach the turret, and drain away its energy supply with the ELF. Since the turret's energy supply is for shooting and shields, the ELF effectively removes both its protection and its ability to fire. That allows the second teammate to easily destroy the fusion turret with a plasma rifle or missile launcher.

> ### CAUTION
> **The ELF acquires its target automatically, but in a scrap, it will target the nearest item or player, whether friendly or enemy.**

The ELF can also ground Scout-armored enemies that are flying around and causing trouble. Sucking away their energy with the ELF leaves them earthbound and less mobile, and a good shot freezes them in place for your teammates to finish them off.

If you have no teammate, you can ELF an enemy, then switch weapons and attack while your foe is grounded. This is an advanced tactic, however, because it's tough for beginners to switch weapons quickly in combat.

Certain situations call for the ELF, but you need either good teammates or the ability to rapidly switch weapons, which is more of an advanced player tactic. Beginners should probably avoid the ELF until they've mastered the more straight-forward weapons.

Fusion Mortar

Fig. 2-10. Nothing matches the fusion mortar's damage and blast radius.

The fusion mortar is only available when you're wearing Juggernaut armor; this limits how often you'll carry it. But if you are wearing Juggernaut armor, it's almost a given that you should take the mortar.

The fusion mortar has limited ammo, and its projectiles must be arced when firing at distant targets, rather than fired in a straight line. This makes aiming at distant targets a tricky proposition, unless you've got a friend using a targeting laser or beacon to paint the target, or you've fired the mortar a good deal.

> **TIP**
>
> Use the fusion mortar in conjunction with an ammunition pack. Otherwise you'll run empty pretty quickly.

Since fusion mortar shells deal massive damage and have a huge blast radius, they're invaluable for ruining enemy bases. In fact, the fusion mortar is the best weapon for destroying heavy, emplaced objects (pulse sensors, base turrets) without lots of shots or assistance from a friend. (Lesser weapons such as the plasma rifle and grenade launcher also work, but they require multiple shots from close range, which is hard to do when you're being shot at.)

While fusion mortars may be designed for taking out heavy equipment, they also work against other players. If they're far away, it's just a question of having enough experience with the mortar to know at what angle to shoot. The mortar's huge blast radius ensures that you don't need perfect aim to damage the target.

Shooting at nearby targets can damage you as well as the target, but since you're in Juggernaut armor, you're often willing to take that risk. Like grenades, fusion mortar shells have a short "arming" period after they're fired, so it's a second or two before the shell actually explodes. (If it weren't for this arming period, the fusion mortar would be truly unmatched as a short-range weapon, and you'd never have any reason not to use it.)

A useful trick when fighting nearby foes is to wait until they're near the end of a jump, then place the shell near the spot where they'll land. This requires practice, but the weapon's huge blast radius helps.

There are other tricks when attacking close-range enemies with the mortar. If you're atop a ridge, for example, you could plant a shell on one side of the ridge and then drop off the other side, thus escaping the damage and perhaps taking out your opponent. Or if a Scout-armored foe is about to grab your flag inside your base, bite the bullet, plant a shell on the floor, and endure some damage as it hurts both you and your enemy.

If you fire the fusion mortar at a 15-degree angle or lower, the shells stick where they land. At a higher trajectory, they bounce around like grenades. Use this knowledge to place mortar shells accurately.

> **TIP**
>
> When a teammate uses the targeting laser, a line extends up from the target—pair of triangles dot this line. Fire at either triangle to hit the target; the lower triangle is a "low trajectory" path, while the higher one indicates a "high trajectory" path.
>
> The lower path may be dangerous if you don't have a clear shot. The high path is seldom risky, but your shells take longer to reach their destination.

Just as it takes time and experience to learn to use the mortar at long range without the aid of a targeting laser, it takes practice to learn how to kill enemies with close-range mortar shells. Keep trying, and keep observing. The fusion mortar proves incredibly potent at any range.

Grenade Launcher

The grenade launcher is one of those powerful yet limited weapons. Shot for shot, few weapons can deal out more punishment. But this power comes at a price, and the grenade launcher is a relatively specialized weapon.

The grenade launcher deals great damage, and its grenades affect a wide radius. It's a true "room-clearing" weapon, perfect for damaging several enemies at once or wrecking a room full of sensitive equipment. The grenades can be fired fairly quickly, resulting in massive damage over a short period of time.
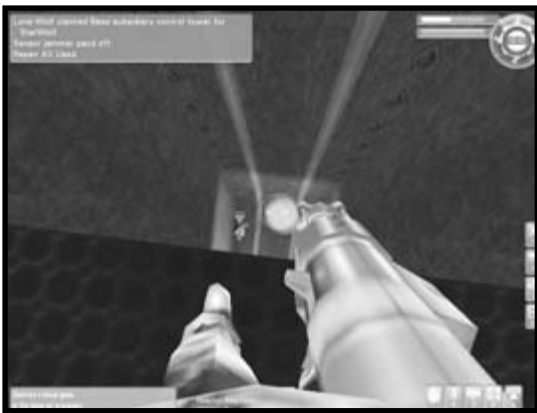
Fig. 2-11. It takes practice to master the grenade launcher's bouncing projectiles.

> **TIP**
>
> While you can destroy heavy turrets and pulse sensors with the grenade launcher, it takes multiple perfect shots in rapid succession to do so. The fusion mortar and plasma rifle work much better against such targets.

Get into the habit of lobbing grenades into a base's open doorway or down its ceiling hatch before you enter. This effectively clears out anyone standing in there and destroys any deployable turrets nearby.

The very thing that makes grenades great for lobbing through holes or around corners—their delayed, bouncing, indirect delivery—makes them hard to use out in the open, particularly against foes in Scout armor. True, the grenades have a big blast radius, but nimble foes can jet up into the sky and evade them, meanwhile pelting you with a chaingun, spinfusor, or other straight-shooting weapon.

Skilled grenade launcher operators can compensate for its deficiencies. Predicting where a jetting enemy will fall, then depositing a grenade there, can be deadly. Similarly, lobbing grenades at a foe who's foolish enough to stand at the bottom of a hill (where the grenades will bounce into his or her lap) can be fun. But a smart, agile enemy in Scout armor can capitalize on the grenades' delayed blast and get out of the way more often than not.

Be particularly careful on steeply inclined terrain. Lobbing grenades downhill at an enemy is safe, but it's nearly impossible to hit an enemy atop a sharp ridge—the grenades simply bounce away and roll down either side. Worse yet, if you happen to be standing on low ground, the grenades might bounce back at you.

Fire the grenade launcher against bases, against heavily armored foes, and in any situation where indirect fire is an asset. It's a great indoor weapon, but don't attack fast enemies in open areas unless you've practiced and mastered it.

Laser Rifle

Fig. 2-12. Nothing beats the laser rifle for long-range sniping.

The laser rifle is yet another powerful but specialized weapon. It's a sniper rifle with deadly long-range power, but it's practically worthless up close.

The laser rifle is only available to a player in Scout armor who's wearing an energy pack. This severely limits the laser rifle's roles; if you aren't wearing the requisite Scout armor and energy pack, you have to wield the blaster or fusion mortar for extremely long-range attacks.

Assuming you can use the laser rifle, it opens up a whole new role for you: sniper. In team games, snipers provide good offense and defense. On offense they harass and pick off defenders, clearing the way for attacks on the enemy base. On defense they whittle down enemies before they get too close to the friendly base and harass heavy foes that would otherwise park themselves up on a hilltop and lob mortar shells.

TIP

Sniping loses effectiveness in some game types—for example, in Hunters, you can snipe a foe at long range, but you won't be close enough to easily collect the flag from the fallen enemy. Someone else might get there first.

Think about the game you're in before deciding on a sniper role.

The laser rifle works in conjunction with your armor's built-in image enhancer, which allows you to zoom in for an easier shot.

Sniping is most effective against motionless or slow-moving enemies and enemies who don't realize you're there. Foes in Juggernaut armor are particularly vulnerable to the laser rifle due to their lack of speed.

You usually cannot kill a perfectly healthy enemy outright with the laser rifle, but you can ALMOST kill a foe with one head shot—and the second shot typically finishes the job.

Use the laser rifle, but recognize its weaknesses.

Missile Launcher

Fig. 2-13. The missile launcher is great against flying enemies and vehicles.

Yet another specialized weapon, the missile launcher is a powerful way of defeating vehicles and flying enemies. It locks onto the heat signature created by vehicles and jump-jets, homing in on the target. When it hits, it deals extreme damage.

You must aim at the target for a second before the missile launcher locks on. You cannot fire without a lock; nothing happens when you pull the trigger without a lock.

Since vehicles always generate heat, you can always get a quick lock on them. Large base turrets and pulse sensors also emit heat. Players, on the other hand, only generate the necessary heat when they're jump-jetting. Missile launchers are best against players who are trying to get away at top speed or trying to stay airborne for a fight. They use their jets most at these times, facilitating missile locks.

If the targeted player stops jetting while the missile approaches, the missile stops homing in. Thus, if you are targeted with a missile launcher, lay off the jets. The other response is to throw a flare grenade and draw the missile off course.

Since the missiles are so potent, you might be interested in using the missile launcher at close range—but you can't. It has a minimum effective range.

Scout armor can't wield this weapon, as it's too heavy. Those who can wield it find its ammo in short supply: four missiles for Assault armor, eight for Juggernaut armor. An ammunition pack may be in order.

Ultimately, the missile launcher is a great utility weapon, especially for players in Juggernaut armor. It takes down vehicles quickly, and shreds enemies who excessively jump-jet. It's also a good base wrecker. Just be aware that the ammunition supply is limited.

Plasma Rifle

Fig. 2-14. The hard-hitting plasma rifle excels at damaging heavily armored targets.

The plasma rifle is a great indoor weapon. It's not as general-purpose as the spinfusor, but it's a potent gun that we recommend carrying most of the time.

The plasma rifle fires round, sluggish plasma shots. The shots are slower-moving than spinfusor discs, but the plasma rifle has a better rate of fire. Combine the slow-moving shots with the fact that they dissipate at long range, and you have a medium- to short-range weapon.

The plasma rifle's shots have a small blast radius and deal excellent damage against heavily armored targets, such as foes in Juggernaut armor and stationary objects.

> **TIP**
>
> The plasma rifle is one of very few weapons powerful enough to take out a heavy turret or pulse sensor by itself. It's usually the best way to destroy indoor objects in an enemy base.

When should you use the plasma rifle? Put away the plasma rifle when firing at long-range targets. Usually you should put it away when you're outside. The shots are fairly slow moving, and the blast radius is not as good as that of the spinfusor.

When firing the plasma rifle at midrange opponents, target heavily armored foes. The spinfusor's faster projectiles reach the mark faster than those of the plasma rifle, ensuring better accuracy. Another thing to consider is that the plasma rifle has a fairly high rate of fire, far more than the spinfusor.

At short range and indoors, the plasma rifle is one of the best weapons available. Its fast rate of fire dishes out massive damage quickly, and the slow-moving shots aren't that much of a drawback. Just watch the ammo; you'll run out pretty quickly in a serious battle.

> **TIP**
>
> Some players prefer the spinfusor inside, because its blasts physically bounce the target around. The plasma rifle won't do that, but we prefer it indoors.

The plasma rifle is one of the best short-range weapons, and one of the best weapons against heavily armored targets. Always take it indoors and when you're planning to destroy enemy turrets, generators, and other base equipment. It's optional outdoors, but even then you might consider it. On the other hand, the plasma rifle doesn't work underwater.

Shocklance

Fig. 2-15. Preferred by assassins and stealth players, the shocklance is geared toward ackstabbing.

Reserve the shocklance for sneak attacks. It causes massive damage from behind, but much less damage if you attack from the front or sides. Its very short range requires proximity to the target.

You might consider the shocklance along with the cloaking pack. The cloaking pack lets you get into position, and the shocklance inflicts a fatal (or near-fatal) blow on your enemies.

The short-range shocklance consumes precious energy. It's not a high-priority weapon outside, but if you like to lurk inside, sneak around, and generally be an assassin, this may become your favorite weapon.

Spinfusor

Fig. 2-16. A standard-issue weapon, the spinfusor is extremely versatile.

The spinfusor is a great weapon. It's appropriate almost all the time, though special situations call for slightly better weapons. The nice thing about the spinfusor is that it works just about anywhere, so you don't have to worry about changing weapons.

The spinfusor inflicts very good damage, the discs it fires travel quickly, and they explode on impact to damage everything within a sizable radius. The spinfusor's reload time is significant, however, so it can't rapid-fire.

> **TIP**
>
> Generally, if your foe is very agile and moves around a lot, aim for the ground near his or her feet instead of trying for direct hits with the spinfusor. The "splash damage" from the discs' blast radius is almost as good as a direct hit.
>
> When your enemies jump-jet in combat, take this technique a step further and watch their trajectory. When they're on the way down, try to send a disc to hit the ground at the spot they're landing at the same time they get there. It takes practice to be good at this, but it's a necessary skill.

The spinfusor is a good choice for common combat tasks, but it's poor at extremes. For example, when extreme range separates you from the target, the spinfusor's discs—while quite fast—still aren't fast enough against a moving enemy. Furthermore, the discs start to lose altitude after traveling a great distance.

> **TIP**
>
> You can "disc-jump" by firing a disc at the ground right after jumping, but right before starting to jump-jet. This damages you but also sends you flying higher than the jets alone could take you.

Against extremely close-range enemies, the spinfusor's sluggish reload time coupled with its splash damage makes it somewhat inferior to the plasma rifle, unless you make the most of your jump-jets and cover.

The spinfusor works better than the plasma rifle against Scout-armored foes, because its discs travel faster than plasma and do more damage against Scout armor. The bigger blast radius helps, too, but the discs are significantly weaker against Juggernaut armor and stationary objects. If possible, pull out the plasma rifle, grenade launcher, or chaingun to deal with these heavier targets.
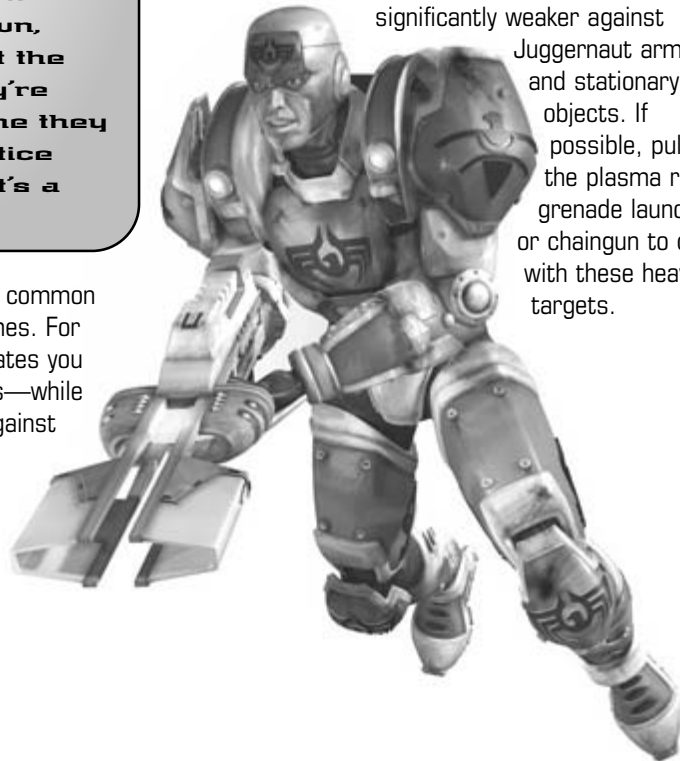
The spinfusor knocks your target around when you score a hit. If you like the idea of not only dealing damage but also making your enemy fly around, the spinfusor is definitely your weapon.

Above all else, remember that the spinfusor is extremely versatile and effective for most combat tasks. Even in a role it wasn't designed for, it gives you a fighting chance—and that's the truest testament to the weapon's broad range of applications.

TIP

The spinfusor, like many weapons, is easier to fire when you're jetting in the air above your enemy and looking down at him or her. Trying to hit an enemy on your level with a spinfusor can be hard, as it's difficult to get the angle just right.

Enemies standing on a hillside are also easy prey, as discs that hit the hill behind them often damage them.

Targeting Laser

The targeting laser is an adjunct to the fusion mortar. Point at a target and hold down the trigger, and targeting triangles appear in the sky to aid the teammates carrying fusion mortars. Missiles from the missle launcher can also lock onto a targeting laser's spot.

Fig. 2-17. The targeting laser helps your teammates use their fusion mortars.

Teammates without fusion mortars can also see the targeting laser, but without the mortars it doesn't do them much good. The main benefit to these teammates is that they see the areas that are soon to be shelled and either avoid them or chip in to help the attack with lesser weapons.

The targeting laser is only valuable in specific situations. If nobody's in position with a fusion mortar to capitalize on your helpful targeting, it all goes to waste. Plus, the targeting laser is clearly visible to everyone, so your enemies will eventually see it and return fire.

Also, extremely good mortar-wielders can often shoot a target without any help. But the targeting laser helps even the most skilled player use the mortar at extreme range.

TIP

Since the targeting laser doesn't occupy a true weapon slot, you always carry one. If you happen to be in position to help a teammate with a mortar deal some damage, you'll be prepared.

If you aren't positive you'll get mortar support, though, think twice before targeting an enemy. It tends to give away your position, and if you can get a clean, steady shot—especially on a stationary human player—you're sometimes better off using the laser rifle or blaster instead and causing direct damage.

Secondary Weapons

These secondary weapons can sometimes mean the difference between success and failure.

Basic Grenades
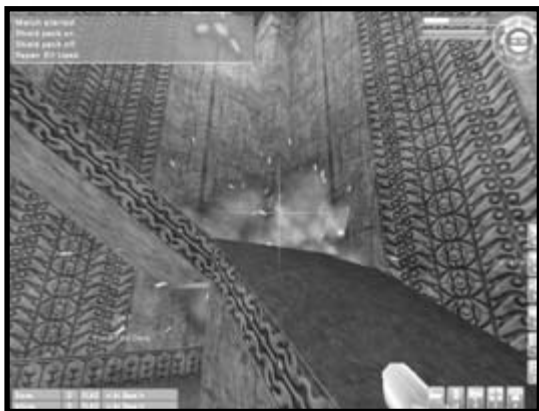
Fig. 2-18. Hold down the button longer to throw grenades farther.

Grenades are similar to the grenades lobbed by a grenade launcher, except they lack the same long-range delivery. Instead, they're tossed a few feet in front of you—more or less, depending on how long you hold down the button before releasing it.

Grenades can supplement your standard weapons in combat, but it's hard to keep track of anything but your primary weapon. Instead, you'll probably throw them most often in cat-and-mouse situations, where you and an opponent are fighting in an enclosed area. You can often flush out the enemy (or deal some damage) by slipping a grenade around a corner, down a hole, or into the middle of a room you suspect he or she is standing in.

When you get more experienced, start to toss grenades and fire your primary weapon at the same time—again, usually in enclosed spaces. Throwing a grenade while you hose down the enemy with plasma is a deadly combination.

Concussion Grenades
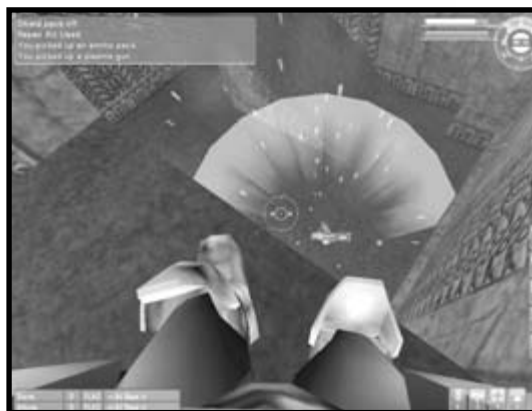
Fig. 2-19. The concussion grenade can cause warriors to drop their weapons.

Concussion grenades don't deal much damage, but they can make your enemy drop a weapon or flag. They also push the enemy away from the point of detonation, causing disorientation. And they can remove a warrior's pack.

Should you use concussion grenades or regular grenades? That's up to you. The prospect of temporarily disarming a foe is a tempting one, but on the other hand, standard grenades do direct damage. Experiment with both, and determine which one you prefer.

Should you take flare grenades? If you plan on jetting into enemy territory, and you suspect you'll face missiles, then yes. If your role will be more ground-based, or if you're going to be a defender, you probably won't need these. Stock up on more traditional grenade types instead.

> ## TIP
> If you aren't careful with concussion grenades, you can disarm yourself! Make sure you throw them far enough away from you that this doesn't happen.

Whiteout Grenades

Fig. 2-21. Whiteout grenades temporarily blind the enemy—and you, if you're not careful.

Whiteout grenades produce a powerful flash that disrupts the vision of anyone looking at them. This includes the thrower, so it's best to turn away after throwing them. The other main technique is to drop them while you're running, so they temporarily blind your pursuers but not you.

Whiteout grenades are extremely potent. They're especially useful for flag runners. After dashing into the enemy base and snatching the flag, you're certain to have a pack of defenders following you all the way back to your base. In this situation, dropping a few whiteout grenades can be a lifesaver.

The same holds true in games of Rabbit, when you have the flag. Drop whiteout grenades while you flee to spoil the aim of anyone chasing you.

Flare Grenades

Fig. 2-20. Flare grenades can either provide light or distract guided missiles.

Though flare grenades provide light, you'll use them almost exclusively to shake a guided missile lock. Flare grenades can save you from both missile launcher and missile turret attacks. Just throw the grenade, and the missile locks onto the grenade instead of you.

foe—they just detonate when someone steps too close, dealing massive damage that usually isn't quite enough to kill a healthy player.

Plant mines around a flag you wish to defend. Confine the mining to very clearly defined areas, because if you sprinkle them around your base, seemingly at random, your teammates will be the most likely victims. Tell your team when you're mining, and make it clear where you're dropping the mines.

You can also mine equipment locations in games without inventory stations. Players eager for the equipment often run onto the mines full speed, killing themselves instantly.

Mines are hard to use in combat situations, because the design team has lengthened the arming period. In the original TRIBES you could throw a mine at an enemy, then shoot a disc at it and detonate it, causing massive damage. This is less feasible now, because it takes a few seconds for the mine to arm. However, you can still use mines in a fight. Drop a couple in mid-fight and try to lure your opponent over them, or shoot the area where you dropped them after giving them a few moments to arm.

> **TIP**
>
> Whiteout grenades are best used by players in Scout armor. They're the ones most likely to want to run away or to avoid combat instead of initiating it.

Mines

Fig. 2-22. Mines can be hazardous to friend and foe alike.

Correctly placed, mines are potent weapons. They also pose a threat to your own team. The key is to place them judiciously and let everyone know where you put them.

Mines take a few moments to arm themselves, during which time they automatically drill themselves into the ground. Be sure to get away as they do this, because once they become active they don't distinguish between friend and

3

Armor Packs & Belt Gear

This chapter looks at packs and belt gear. Each player can carry one pack and a variable amount of belt gear.

Packs are extremely powerful, and your abilities as a player are greatly affected by the pack you select. An energy pack makes you super-mobile, allowing you to become a sniper; an ammunition pack lets you walk deep into enemy territory without needing an inventory station; a cloaking pack instantly transforms you into a stealthy assassin or base infiltrator. Read on for detailed information on every pack in the game, plus the less critical (but still useful) belt gear that you can select.

Packs

You can wear one pack at a time. Assuming you're playing a mission where inventory stations (where you can easily get a pack) are readily available, there's absolutely no reason NOT to be wearing a pack at all times; they're so useful that you're at a huge disadvantage without one.

As you play, you'll learn which packs are most helpful to your personal style. There are no hard and fast rules; the following pages provide information and suggestions on what roles each pack is best suited for.

Permanent Packs

Permanent packs are worn until you get killed, or until you drop them or buy a different pack. They never get "used up," though packs that derive power from your armor's energy cell turn themselves off automatically when the power runs out.

Some of these packs are constantly in effect, while others need to be turned on whenever you want to use them.

AMMUNITION PACK

The ammunition pack doubles the total amount of ammunition you can carry. It requires no energy to operate. If you drop the pack, the excess ammunition is dropped as well.

TIP

An important change from the original TRIBES: Not only does the ammunition pack let you carry extra ammunition, but it also lets you carry an extra repair kit. Having two repair kits instead of just one is a big advantage, and it makes the ammunition pack a lot more attractive.

The ammunition pack is a poor choice if you're using lots of weapons that operate on energy, such as the blaster, ELF projector, and laser rifle. It's also not necessary if you spend most of your time hanging around an inventory station—for example, when you're playing base defense.

The ammunition pack is at its best when you're operating far from your base—say, if you're assaulting the enemy base. Having the extra ammunition is extremely useful when supplies aren't readily available, and the extra repair kit helps keep you alive longer.

Also, certain weapons that are potent but typically short on ammunition become much better when you've got the ammunition pack. These include the plasma gun, missile launcher, and fusion mortar. If you're planning on making heavy use of such weapons, consider the ammunition pack.

CLOAKING PACK

The cloaking pack is a new addition to TRIBES 2. It is intended for players who want to be stealthy, and its powers are somewhat complicated.

If the cloaking pack is NOT ACTIVATED, its only effect is to hide you from pulse sensors.

If the cloaking pack is activated, not only will it hide you from pulse sensors, but it will also make you virtually invisible. This hides you from enemy players and deployable cameras.

What's all this boil down to? The bottom line is that the cloaking pack is great for infiltrating enemy bases protected by pulse sensors and enemy players. It's also great for sneaking around in general. The only things it does not hide you from are motion sensors. Thus, you're still vulnerable if you're attacking a base protected by deployed motion sensors or sentry turrets.

Fun and useful things to do with the cloaking pack include stealing the enemy flag without warning, getting inside the enemy base undetected and destroying generators, and assassinating players who don't even know you're there.

The shocklance is a great weapon if you're cloaked, but remember that it draws off your energy supply just like the cloaking pack. It will use about 20 percent of a full energy meter to work. Otherwise, it dry-fires. Thus, you'll do more damage if you haven't been cloaked for long, and the cloak will drop when you attack.

TIP

When using the cloaking pack to infiltrate an enemy base, watch for deployed motion sensors. When possible, destroy them. Otherwise, avoid them. Also avoid sentry turrets if at all possible.

ENERGY PACK

Fig. 3-1. Energy packs enable you to use the laser rifle and make you a lot more mobile.

The energy pack greatly increases the recharge rate of your armor's built-in energy cell. It can benefit any armor type because it allows players to use their jump-jets more often, increasing speed and mobility.

The energy pack is required if you want to use the laser rifle. This, and the fact that the energy pack makes Scout armor super-maneuverable, ensures that Scout armor wearers are common users of the energy pack. But any armor type can benefit from the added mobility of the energy pack.

Energy weapons like the laser rifle or the blaster benefit greatly from the energy pack, because the faster your energy recharges, the faster you can fire. Take at least one energy weapon so you can capitalize on the increased rate of fire allowed by the energy pack.

Most often, use the energy pack when you're playing the role of sniper or flag raider. As a sniper you need the energy pack for the laser rifle, and as a flag raider you can use it to speed your approach and getaway. You'll also jump higher than usual, often allowing you to enter bases from heights that would otherwise be impossible.

Make no mistake, though: The energy pack can be useful regardless of what role you play. It's at its best when you're outside and when you need to get around quickly, but its benefits apply to most situations. You enjoy a tremendous edge in combat whenever you're wearing the energy pack.
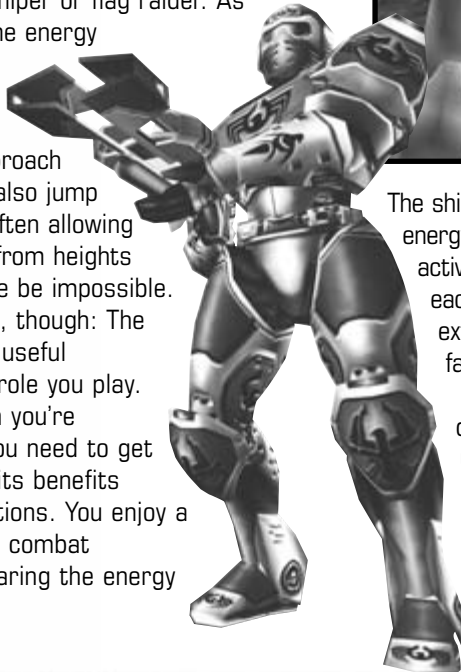
SHIELD PACK

The shield pack absorbs damage, but at a cost of energy; it slowly drains your energy supply while active, so you can't leave it on indefinitely. Also, each hit absorbed by the shield pack drains extra energy, so the more you get shot the faster it'll turn itself off.

The shield pack can help anyone absorb damage, but it's especially useful indoors. Outdoors, avoid shots by jump-jetting rather than absorbing them with the shield pack, especially if you're in Scout armor. Indoors, your mobility is limited, so turn on the shield pack and slug it out.

Fig. 3-2. This Juggernaut-armor wearer has an active shield pack. You can tell, because the shield glimmers faintly whenever he's hit.

Players in Assault armor and Juggernaut armor get more value out of the shield pack than Scout armor, because with their limited mobility, they're better off shielding themselves than jumping around.

Experiment with the shield pack. It's an excellent advantage in pitched battles where you must kill or be killed. It's of less value when you need to conserve energy for moving around or escaping a hostile area.

SENSOR JAMMER PACK

The sensor jammer pack does nothing when it's not activated. When activated, it creates a 20-meter jamming field around the user. This field hides everyone within the radius from ALL MECHANICAL DETECTION. Pulse sensors, motion sensors, and cameras will all fail to see the user (and anyone else within 20 meters). This allows the user and companions to sneak past turrets without being fired upon.

In addition, an activated sensor jammer pack will reveal cloaked players who come into its area of effect. This is a *very* useful application when on defense.
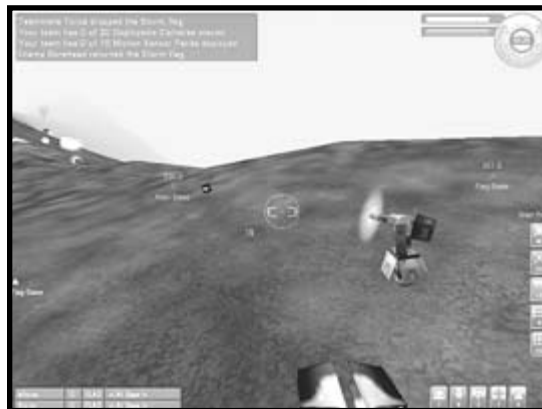

Fig. 3-3. This landspike turret won't shoot at the player, because he's currently using a sensor jammer pack.

Enemy players can still see the user when the sensor jammer pack is active—it's not the same as invisibility—but no red triangle appears over the user's head, and the user is not added to the enemy sensor net.

While the sensor jammer is active, enemy players are the only things that can see you, and no turret will fire at you under any circumstances.

Any armor type can use the sensor jammer pack effectively, but Scout armor is best. (It's hard to be stealthy in Juggernaut armor!) A player in Scout armor can hide behind terrain features, use the jammer pack when crossing areas monitored by radar, and then use the Scout armor's speed to quickly infiltrate the enemy base.

The question is, "Do I need this thing?" The answer depends on the map and the sort of defenses you're facing. If the enemy base is riddled with turrets and there's not much cover leading up to it, then yes, you can get lots of value from the jammer pack. It can be positively priceless.

On the other hand, if the enemy base has lots of hilly terrain around it, you can often sneak up without the jammer pack. Also, if your target has lots of vigilant human defenders, you'll probably be seen despite the pack.

An ideal sensor jammer pack scenario would be a game of Capture & Hold, where two teams of three players are fighting on a map with seven different objectives. There aren't enough human enemies to defend all seven objectives, so they'll rely on the objectives' built-in defenses, plus deployed turrets and mines, to temporarily hold unoccupied objectives. With the sensor jammer pack you can walk right past most of those defenses (though you still need to watch out for mines).

TIP

It's important to understand that pure stealth only gets you so far. After you've grabbed the enemy flag or started to destroy parts of the enemy base, you'll be detected regardless of the jammer pack. If you think you can make it to the base without the jammer, therefore, you might be better off with an energy pack that lets you beat a hasty retreat once you're detected.

REPAIR PACK

It's tempting to take a repair pack all the time. The lure of constant repairs is strong: Nobody wants to run back to base every time they get shot up. However, since it takes a while to heal yourself, using the repair pack in combat is trickier than it sounds.
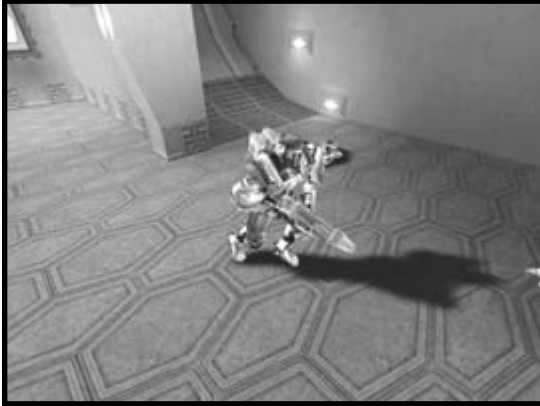

Fig. 3-4. The repair pack can repair damaged objects and teammates, as well as yourself.

The repair pack also allows you to repair teammates' armor, turrets, sensors, and other crucial objects.

Advanced players can sometimes get away with repairing themselves during battle. They duck behind a ridge or another convenient obstacle, repair themselves, and then start fighting again. For most players, though, healing yourself in mid-battle is tempting, but a bad idea. The minute you stop returning fire, you stop pressuring your opponent, who will get better shots at you. The repairs will be quickly neutralized by the incoming hail of fire.

The repair pack is more useful in heavier armor than in lighter armor; you're more likely to take serious damage but still survive combat in Juggernaut armor.

In a large group, it's great if at least one player has a repair pack and can heal the others.

Deployables

Deployable packs provide no benefit until they're dropped on the ground. Then they become something useful: a remote inventory station, a remote pulse sensor, a landspike turret…you name it.

The beginner often dismisses the power of deployables, instead favoring the boost to combat ability provided by permanent packs. But deployables build an infrastructure of inventory stations, sensors, and turrets that aids your entire team. These items are extremely powerful—even crucial—in team games.

REMOTE PULSE SENSOR
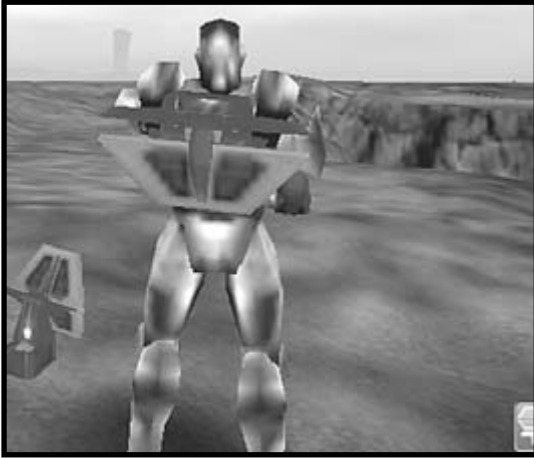
The more you play, the more you realize how important your team's sensor network is. There are too many players in the average game for you to just GUESS where they all are, so rely on the sensor network to give you clues about where enemies are and what they're up to.

Furthermore, enemies located by the sensor network have a red triangle above their heads, so you can immediately figure out whether they're friend or foe. This is extremely important, because you can immediately assess the situation if you know who's a friend and who's an enemy.

The remote pulse sensor extends your team's sensor range. Like all pulse sensors, it works on a line-of-sight basis, so a remote pulse sensor placed on the crest of a hill covers much more terrain than a remote pulse sensor deep in a valley. Of course, a remote pulse sensor is more likely to be seen and destroyed on a hilltop than in a valley, so strike a balance between visibility and effectiveness.

To see the radius of effect of a remote pulse sensor, select it in the command circuit. Remote pulse sensors are subject to jamming from sensor jammer packs and cloaking packs, so there may be unseen enemies within that radius.

The bottom line is that it's extremely valuable to have a network of sensors scattered across the map, and the remote pulse sensor, with its wide area of detection, is the best choice for covering lots of ground.

REMOTE MOTION SENSOR

Fig. 3-5. Since remote motion sensors can see through walls and other obstacles, place them in highly shielded areas.

The remote motion sensor, like a remote pulse sensor, detects enemies and adds them to your team's sensor network.

The remote motion sensor has a much smaller effective radius than the remote pulse sensor, and it cannot detect stationary enemies; they must be moving to be seen.

Despite these drawbacks, the motion sensor is useful because it can detect enemies even if they're using cloaking packs. (Sensor jammer packs, however, can fool the remote motion sensor).

Most of your team's sensor network should consist of remote pulse sensors, but always place a couple of remote motion sensors near your base. If you don't use them, enemies with cloaking packs can walk right into your base and grab your flag without ever being detected, visually or mechanically.

Because of the remote motion sensor's small effective radius, you won't have enough time to cover the map with them. Instead of blanketing the map (which is a job for remote pulse sensors), place them in highly important locales, such as near your base, near turrets, and near crucial spots such as towers.

TIP

Place a remote motion sensor near a turret or any other emplaced defense. Enemies with cloaking packs often decide to walk right past the turret, thinking that their packs will prevent the turret from seeing them—but the motion sensor picks them up, and the turret hoses them down.

BASE TURRET BARREL

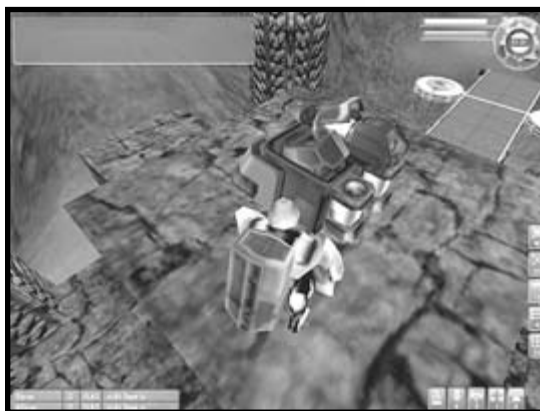Fig. 3-6. Base turret barrels allow you to change the emplaced defenses at your team's bases and outposts.

Large, emplaced turrets guard most bases, towers, and other important spots in team games. A base turret barrel can transform any of the turrets into any other kind. For example, if you're frequently getting attacked from the air, you could replace a plasma turret with an AA turret or missile turret.

Base turret barrels come in several varieties. Just select the variety you want, take it to a turret, and activate it to replace the turret.

Replacing turret barrels won't be a high priority until you're a fairly experienced player familiar with the maps. When you ARE experienced and familiar with the maps, feel free to change one turret barrel for another. For example, if a particular base can only be entered by jump-jetting, replace a plasma turret with a missile turret.

> ### TIP
> Scout armor can't carry the base turret barrel because it's too heavy. You need Assault or Juggernaut armor to take this item.

LANDSPIKE TURRET

Landspike turrets are key to defending the territory around important structures. They aren't as durable as the larger, emplaced turrets, and they have limited range, but they deal damage quickly and have a built-in, short-range pulse sensor that lets them fire automatically at any enemy that gets too close.

Landspike turrets can only be placed on flat, exterior ground. You need spider-clamp turrets to defend interiors. Only players wearing Assault or Juggernaut armor can carry the landspike turret. There's also a limit on the total number of turrets a team can field, based on the number of players on the larger team. It's a sliding scale: At the low end, each

Fig. 3-7. Once they lock onto you, landspike turrets finish you off quickly.

team gets up to four landspike turrets and four spider-clamp turrets. At the high end, it's 10 and 10 for a total of 20 turrets.

Landspike turrets generate an interference field, so there's a limit to how many you can place in a given area. You're forced to spread them out somewhat.

A wide network of landspike turrets and various sensors makes your base hard to attack. Also, landspike turrets placed out in the open or at clever places near a base can lay unsuspecting enemies low very quickly.

Use landspike turrets to defend crucial areas, including your base. Chapter 4 of this guide provides detailed advice on getting the most out of these important items.

Spider-Clamp Turret

The spider-clamp turret can be placed where landspike turrets cannot: on rocks, indoors, even on walls and ceilings. They can't be placed outdoors on normal terrain.

Spider-clamp turrets are slightly less powerful and more fragile than landspike turrets, but their ability to go on walls and ceilings allows you to place them where they might not immediately be noticed.

Just as it's important to build a network of landspike turrets around critical areas, you should build up networks of spider-clamp turrets to harass enemies that find their way inside.

Spider-clamp turrets are often paired with remote motion sensors. This allows them to fire at enemies that infiltrated your base using cloaking packs.
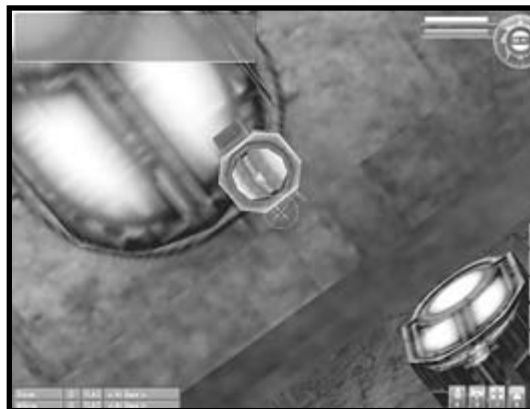
Remote Inventory Station

Fig. 3-8. Remote inventory stations are crucial to efficient play.

When deployed, remote inventory stations create miniature versions of the full-sized inventory stations found at bases. The main differences between these packs and their full-sized counterparts are that these stations have limited energy (and thus will run dry after enough purchases), and you can't purchase armor from them.

> ### TIP
> You can't purchase remote inventory stations at a remote inventory station. Otherwise it'd be far too easy to set up big networks of them.

Remote inventory stations may only be carried by players wearing Assault or Juggernaut armor. The remote inventory station is so heavy that it affects jumping ability and maneuverability when carried.

Remote inventory stations are among the most crucial items in the game. Not only do they provide weapons, packs, and belt gear, but they can also restore players' health.

Think of remote inventory stations as miniature bases. They supplement full-sized inventory stations in bases where inventory stations are in short supply, and they can be dropped anywhere to create an instant staging area for attack on enemy territory. We discuss them at length in Chapter 4.

REMOTE DETONATION SATCHEL PACK

The remote detonation satchel pack is a powerful weapon. Activate it once to drop it, and activate it a second time to detonate it. The blast is similar to that of a fusion mortar turret.

This item is sometimes used in a defensive capacity—for example, you can drop a satchel pack on a flag and wait nearby, then detonate it when an enemy tries to grab the flag. You can also drop it in mid-fight, hoping that the enemy doesn't notice, and try to lure the enemy over it.

If you're into straightforward combat, the remote detonation satchel pack won't be your first choice. But if you enjoy setting deadly traps and giving the enemy a nasty surprise, this pack could be ideal for you.

Another good use is to run into an enemy base, kamikaze-style, and detonate the pack on an important generator. Be sure to drop grenades and mines at the same time to maximize the devastating blast. Also try using it for blasting out enemies in heavy armor who have "turtled" in the depths of a base.

Belt Gear

Belt gear covers a wide range of functions. All belt gear except the repair patch may be purchased at an inventory station. You can carry a finite number of belt gear items, but carrying one type doesn't prevent you from taking another—so you can carry a repair kit AND your maximum load of target beacons.

Take ALL available belt gear every time you visit an inventory station. It's cheap, it can be carried in addition to weapons and packs, and it sometimes comes in handy.

Repair Patch
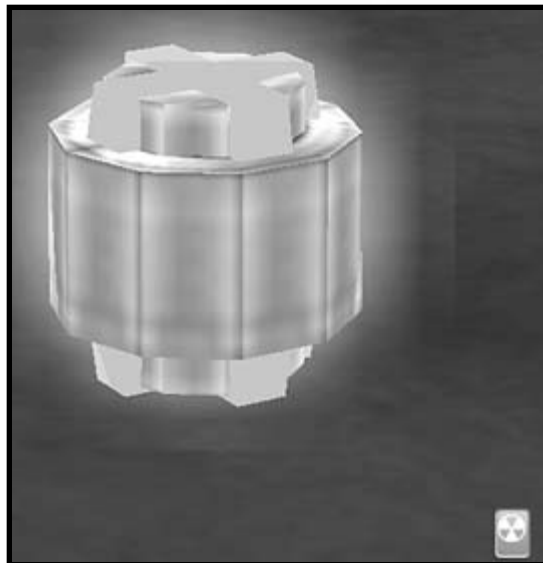
Repair patches are the only items discussed in this chapter that cannot be purchased or carried. They're found lying on the ground in certain Deathmatch missions. Just run across them to restore a percentage of your armor.

Repair Kit

Repair kits ARE available at inventory stations, though you can only carry one at a time. Like the repair patch, the repair kit fixes a percentage of your armor.

TIP

Wearers of the ammo pach can carry TWO repair hits.

You should always carry a repair kit; get into the habit of automatically pressing the key to activate it whenever you've taken over half damage. Beginners often forget to use their repair kits, which not only makes them easier to kill, but their opponents get to collect their unused repair kits from the ground after killing them! Don't let this happen to you. Always carry a repair kit, and always use it.

Remote Camera

The remote camera only detects enemies within a small range, and it must be pointed more or less toward those enemies to see them. However, since you can carry these items in addition to a regular pack, you should scatter them around your base to build up the sensor net. They stick to walls, floors, and ceilings.

Cameras are fooled by activated cloaking packs and sensor jammers. This reduces their effectiveness, but again, since you can carry them in addition to other gear, there's no reason not to. They might catch an enemy with a deactivated cloaking pack that wouldn't otherwise be seen.
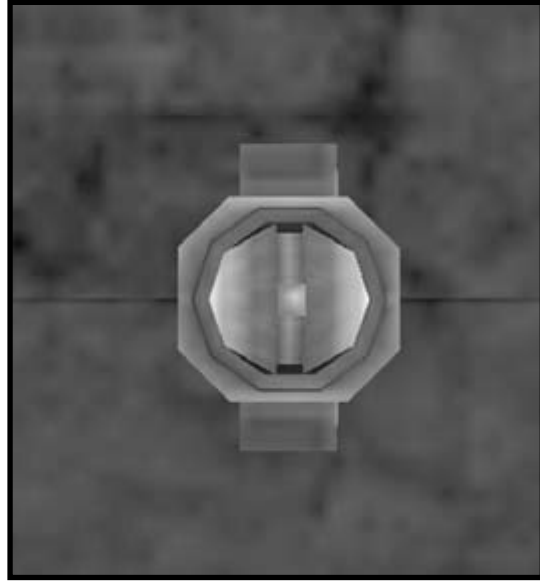

Fig. 3-9. Place remote cameras on walls and ceilings, where your enemies will never suspect them.

Cameras can be controlled from the assets list in the command circuit. Just locate a camera on this list and click on its control square, and you can look through its eyes.

The best places for cameras are inside bases, on high vantage points, and near turrets. Cameras in friendly bases are ideal for spotting enemies for turrets; cameras in enemy bases allow you to see exactly what the enemy is up to.

Beacons

Fig. 3-10. Beacons present teammates with the same visual information as a targeting laser.

Beacons create a target for your teammates, much as a targeting laser does. These powerful items are often overlooked. You have to be next to the target to use the beacon effectively, which often requires you to enter a highly risky area. However, there's a real benefit to being able to paint a target with a beacon and then immediately run away, as opposed to standing in place for a prolonged period of time, pointing the targeting laser at your objective, and hoping you don't get shot.

Learn to drop beacons near enemy fortifications to take them out quickly, and in enemy bases—especially if you're about to get killed anyway. But be sure to clear out after dropping them— standing near a beacon you've just dropped is a recipe for disaster.

You also can use beacons to mark the locations of remote inventory stations. That way you can place the inventory stations in hard-to-see spots, and your whole team will still be able to find them easily.

Mines and Grenades

Since mines and grenades are weapons in addition to belt gear, they're covered in Chapter 2. Look there for detailed information.

Summary

It takes time to learn how to get the most out of your packs and belt gear. Experiment with different packs in different situations, and use mines and grenades to supplement your already-formidable arsenal.

Both packs and belt gear can give you a tremendous boost if you use them properly.
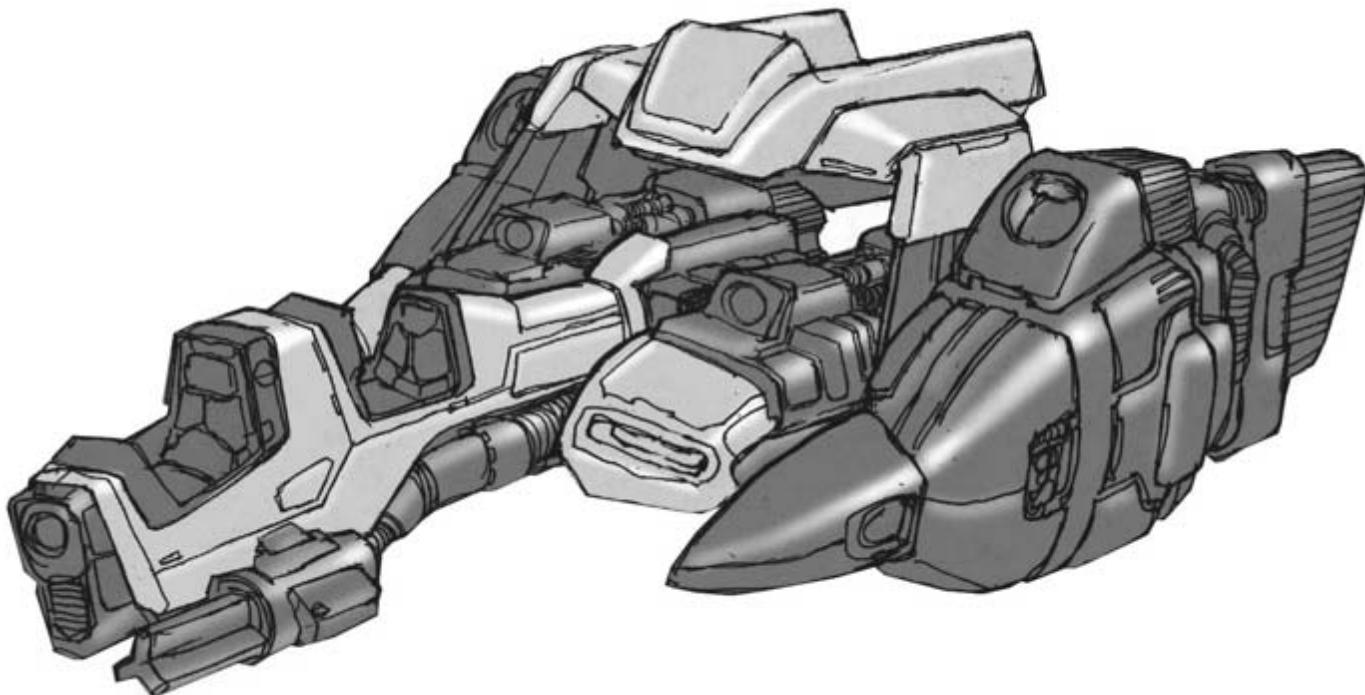
4
Base Assets and Vehicles

In some multiplayer games, other players provide your only threats—and your only targets. TRIBES 2 differs; it's more useful to destroy an enemy generator than an actual enemy, and you can't ignore the threat of a plasma turret any more than you can ignore a player. This chapter looks at the nonplayer components of the game world: the turrets, sensors, generators, vehicles, etc.

Not understanding these objects leads to quick failure. Likewise, thoroughly understanding them gives you a serious edge over inexperienced players. Read on to get a sense of what's out there, how it works, and how to use it.

> **TIP**
>
> Instead of by category, features are organized by where you'll find them, either outdoors or indoors. A small section at the chapter's end discusses vehicles separately.

EXTERIOR FEATURES

The great outdoors is a dangerous place in TRIBES 2. It's crawling with enemies, some obvious and some not so obvious. A key to survival is understanding the nonhuman threats.

Base

Fig. 4-1. All bases look different, but they have similar features.

A base is a collection of fortifications and resources. The typical base is an enclosed structure with one or more turrets for defense. It offers crucial resources, such as pulse sensors, inventory stations, and vehicle stations. It possesses one or more entrances.

Some bases are more open and thus harder to defend. Most bases have generators, which power all (or most) of the mechanical assets (turrets, pulse sensors, inventory stations). Destroying the generators renders the base's mechanical assets useless until the generators are repaired.

TIP

At almost every base, a repair pack sits around somewhere. If the generators go down, find that repair pack and fix them.

Your base is always vital, but in some missions it's more crucial than in others. Capture the Flag games put a huge emphasis on base defense; without strong base defense, your flag will be gone before you know it.

Other missions de-emphasize bases. For example, in a Capture & Hold mission where the sole objective is to maintain control of three neutral towers in the middle of the map, you won't have to defend your base that much—attention focuses on those three towers instead.

Even if bases aren't the focal point of a mission, however, they're strategically important. If the enemy invades and trashes your base, your team must waste valuable time and effort making repairs. Therefore, defend your base.

If you happen upon an enemy base, you can't just rush in, commando-style, and wreck it. An attack requires cunning stealth tactics, blazing speed, or massive firepower (by attacking with friends) to deal significant harm to a base.

Tower

The term "tower" indicates any structure smaller than a base. In a Capture & Hold game, "towers" refers to the locations your team must capture and hold.

Fig. 4-2. Towers, like bases, come in various shapes and sizes. They often have a "trigger" area to touch to claim them for your team.

Many towers start out neutral. Team members claim a tower for their team by touching its control switch. Control of towers can change hands many times during a mission. (Some towers don't have a control switch; like bases, they belong to one side or the other or are simply empty husks.)

TIP

Towers don't always look like towers. Some towers, for example, look more like dugouts or bunkers. The general term "tower," refers to any fortified outpost with turrets or other useful features, especially one that can change hands over the course of a mission.

While typically smaller and less fortified than bases, towers sometimes possess the same amenities, such as inventory stations and various turrets. However, towers are usually in territory that's up for grabs, and they are quite small (thus easy to invade). Therefore, a tower is harder to keep control of than a base.

Vehicle Station

Vehicle stations, which can appear both indoors and outdoors, are covered under "Interior Features" later in this chapter.

Pulse Sensor (a.k.a. Sensor Array)

Fig. 4-3. Pulse sensors are crucial resources. If they're knocked out, it's hard to figure out where the enemy is.

Pulse sensors (also called sensor arrays) are your team's primary sensors. They're big rotating dishes covering a vast radius. Enemies and enemy objects in the pulse sensor's field of view appear on your team's sensor network.

Pulse sensors operate on line-of-sight, and thus cannot "see" things behind walls or ridges. If you're ever in doubt as to whether a pulse sensor
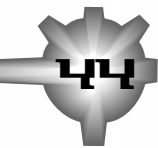
can see you, just think of it as a big set of eyes. If you can see it, and you're within its effective range, then it can assuredly see you. If you can't see it, then it probably can't see you either.

> **TIP**
>
> Keep your team's pulse sensors in good repair. In addition to letting your teammates see enemy positions, pulse sensors help your turrets see enemies.

As with turrets, the pulse sensor's built-in energy supply constantly replenishes. This energy supply matches the energy cell built into every player's armor. Whereas a suit of armor's energy cell powers jump-jets and certain weapons, the pulse sensor's energy goes into shields. To destroy the pulse sensor, knock down those shields.

A pulse sensor with active shields emits a brief flash as your weapon fire hits the shields. Your weapons deal no damage to a pulse sensor until its shields are knocked down. Unfortunately, those shields replenish so fast that you won't get anywhere unless you use the right weapons.

Repeatedly fire at the pulse sensor with a weapon strong enough to destroy it (fusion mortar and plasma rifle are best) or to have multiple teammates fire at it simultaneously. Remember, those shields never stop recharging! You have to destroy a pulse sensor with a constant stream of fire.

> **TIP**
>
> Once the pulse sensor's shields go down, it can be destroyed quickly. If yours gets damaged, get close and use a repair pack to fix it.

Using the ELF projector in conjuction with a plasma rifle will effectively damage pulse sensors. Use the ELF to drain away the sensor's shield power, then switch to the plasma gun, which then destroys the sensor in just a few shots.

The other way to take down a pulse sensor is to destroy the generator that powers it. Be advised, however, that some maps have pulse sensors with generators you can't get at. In these cases a direct attack is your only recourse.

> **TIP**
>
> The same rule holds true for turrets: if they have visible generators, destroying the generators temporarily disables them. Otherwise, take out the turrets themselves.

Plasma Turret

Fig. 4-4. Plasma turrets fire slow projectiles that prove very deadly at close range.

The plasma turret provides a general-purpose defense against any foes in the vicinity. It fires slow but powerful balls of plasma that deal severe—usually lethal—damage on impact. Agile foes will evade the plasma, especially at longer ranges, but close up, it's harder to avoid.

Plasma turrets have a built-in pulse sensor with a limited range. They rely on your team's sensor network to spot their prey at longer ranges, so it's important to have functioning pulse sensors and motion sensors near your base.

The plasma turret only fires at enemies within a fairly limited radius—even if those targets are detected by your team's sensor network. Manually taking control of the plasma turret via the command circuit rectifies this shortcoming. However, its projectiles move slowly, so it's very hard to hit distant, moving targets.

Generally speaking, don't take direct control of a plasma turret. It does its job at close range, and at long range it's hard to hit enemies.

Figure 4-5. Destroying the generators powering the turret is one way to knock it out.

You can render the plasma turret temporarily useless in three ways. The first (and most direct) approach is to destroy it with weapons fire. The same energy that powers the plasma turret's shields also powers its plasma shots, so the turret won't be able to shoot back after you've damaged it beyond a certain point.

Second, destroy the generator that powers the plasma turret. But again, while some turrets have generators, others have "implied" generators that theoretically exist SOMEWHERE, but they aren't accessible. For these turrets, cutting off the power source is not an option.

The final way to avoid plasma turret harm, is to remove yourself from the sensor network with a sensor jammer pack or cloaking pack.
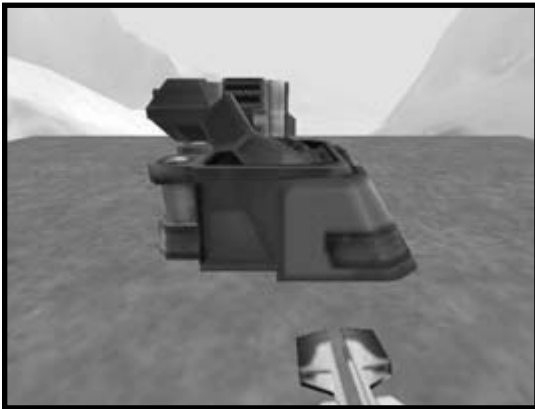

Fig. 4-6. Missile turrets are ideal against vehicles and jetting players.

Missile Turret

Missile turrets fire energy-seeking missiles that home in on their targets and deal great damage. They are extremely accurate at long range.

The missile turret has a limitation as well: It won't automatically fire at just anything. Its target must not only be visible on the sensor network, but also be jump-jetting or flying in a vehicle. (Both jump-jets and vehicles produce great amounts of heat, which alerts the missile turret to enemy

presence.) Thus, you can walk right past a missile turret and it won't fire at you. Just remember not to use your jump-jets, fly, or drive past one in a vehicle.

Since the missiles lock in on the closest energy source, regardless of team affiliation, it's easy for a player in manual control of a missile turret to kill his or her teammates. Exercise caution, and don't aim into a crowd if your teammates are in it.

When dealing with enemy missile turrets, stay on the ground, and out of their line of sight, or use an appropriate pack to make yourself invisible to sensors. If you're shot at, either bail out of your vehicle, stop using your jets, or fire a flare grenade to distract the missile.

TIP

Missile turrets have been toned down from the original TRIBES. They're more of an antivehicle threat now; a player has to jump-jet quite a while to build up enough heat for the missile turret to lock on.
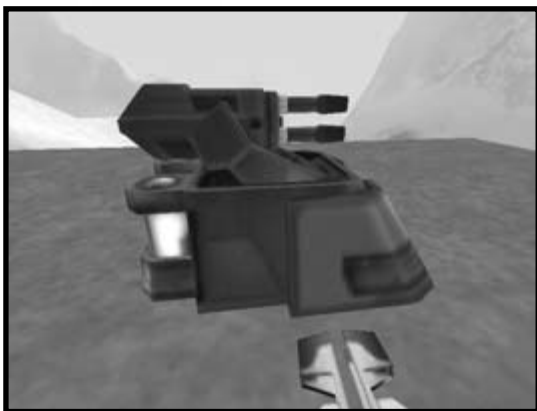
Figure 4-7. The AA turret specializes in shooting targets out of the sky.

Antiaircraft (AA) Turret

The antiaircraft turret fires at anything and everything in the sky—land units have nothing to fear from it.

Should you defend your base with an AA turret or a missile turret?

Missile turrets can attack land vehicles as well as aircraft, and they pack lots of punch. Their missiles home in with deadly accuracy if the target generates enough heat. AA turrets can't attack land targets at all, but they're devastating against air targets and they fire continuously. Which is better? It depends largely on whether your base is being attacked from the air or not; experiment with both.

If you're attacked by an AA turret, get out of range quickly or fall to the ground—flare grenades won't save you.

Electron Flux (ELF) Turret

Fig. 4-8. The ELF turret sucks the energy out of enemies at medium to close range and deals twice as much damage as the ELF projector.

The ELF turret works like a larger version of the ELF projector by sucking energy out of its target while dealing minor damage. This turret won't always kill enemies, but it does render them incapable of using jump-jets or other energy-based devices for a short time, leaving them vulnerable to defenders.

The short-range ELF turret is highly effective in this capacity. Don't take control of one, because it does a good job all by itself.

More than any other turret type, the ELF turret is a "helper." It won't kill enemy players outright; it just interferes with them and slows them down. Have teammates nearby capitalize on the enemies' difficulties.

The ELF turret can be neutralized by destroying it directly, by destroying a generator powering it, or simply by staying off the enemy sensor network.
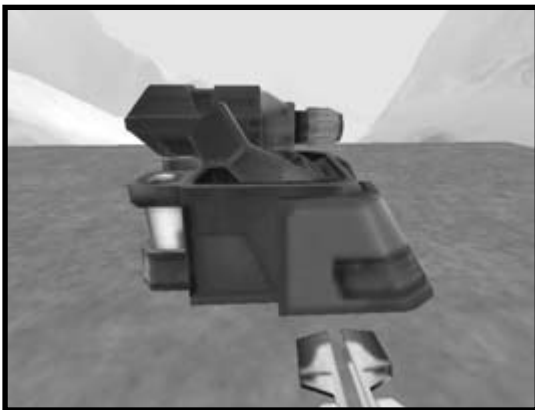
Fusion Mortar Turret

Fig. 4-9. Fusion mortar turrets usually aren't positioned in spots where they can see the enemy, but targeting lasers and beacons help.

The fusion mortar turret is incredibly damaging; after all, it's an even bigger version of the heavy mortar available to heavy armor. It's usually in protected spots lacking a particularly great field of view, so your teammates have to spot enemies for it with the targeting laser or beacons.

Controlling the fusion mortar turret yourself poses a hazard: it can easily blow itself up if you fire a shell at too low an angle. A single misfire will destroy the turret, so be careful, and fire at a reasonably high angle.

The mortar turret can be blown up directly or disabled by taking out its generator. Otherwise you can usually avoid it, as it lies dormant when not manned, and it can't easily fire at targets that get too close. Just keep on the move.

INTERIOR FEATURES

The following features show up indoors or at the edges of bases or turrets, though exceptions do exist.

Sentry Turret

Fig. 4-10. This sentry turret won't shoot if you freeze in your tracks.

The sentry resembles an enhanced, permanent version of a spider-clamp turret. It retracts when not in use and pops open when enemies are detected nearby. It takes a moment for the sentry to switch from its dormant state to a firing state, but once it's ready it can deal serious damage.

The sentry lacks the durability of, say, a full-size plasma turret, but it can take a great deal of punishment.

Several methods effectively defeat a sentry. The first is to blow it up while it's open, preferably with fusion mortar shells, grenades, or plasma rifle shots. Another option is to destroy the generator that powers it.

One popular technique for sneaking past a sentry is to run forward until the sentry pops out of its dormant state and aims at you, then immediately stop dead in your tracks. The sentry "sees" you with a built-in motion sensor, but it won't shoot if you aren't moving. Wait until it goes back into its dormant state, then advance a few more steps. Repeat until you're past the sentry.

This technique works just fine if there aren't any other enemies around. If there are, however, they'll hose you down with weapons fire while you're waiting for the sentry to go away. If you suspect enemies lurk in the area, destroy the sentry turret or infiltrate the base from some other direction.

> ### CAUTION
> **Additional sensors in the area, such as a camera looking directly at you, can alert the sentry to your position even if you freeze. In this case, stopping only gets you killed faster.**

Ultimately, the sensor jammer pack is the easiest way to get past a sentry turret.

Inventory Station

Inventory stations are probably the most important objects in the game. They allow your teammates to equip themselves with the armor, weapons, and gear they need. However, their relative fragility makes them an obvious target.

When infiltrating an enemy base, try to destroy all inventory stations. Generators are the other preferred target.

Fig. 4-11. Inventory stations are crucial. A team without inventory stations suffers a severe disadvantage.

When defending your base, keep the inventory stations in mind. Leave a spider-clamp turret or two around the inventory stations, and add a motion sensor as well. This makes it hard for an enemy to walk in and trash the inventory stations.

Even if you have a ready supply of inventory stations, it's helpful to drop a couple of deployable inventory stations near your base. The more places your teammates can equip themselves, the better.

> ### TIP
> **Inventory stations heal injured players. If you're severely damaged, linger on the inventory station until you're fully healed.**

Vehicle Station

The vehicle station (which can appear indoors or outdoors) is like an inventory station, except that you can only purchase vehicles there. Purchase a vehicle, and it appears on a nearby launching pad. You can't purchase a vehicle if there's already one sitting on the pad.
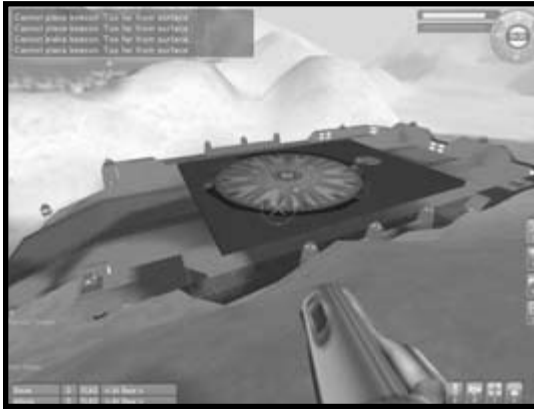

Fig. 4-12. Vehicle stations are a powerful asset. Destroy the enemy's vehicle stations to severely disrupt attacks.

The selection of powerful vehicles in TRIBES 2 makes vehicle stations even more crucial than in the original TRIBES. Do your best to defend your own and take down the enemy's.

Don't buy superfluous vehicles and leave them sitting on the pad, as this impedes teammates who may want to buy a different vehicle.

Generators and Solar Panels

Generators make a base's electronic items work. Taking them out temporarily disables the base's inventory stations, pulse sensors, and turrets.

If you sneak inside the enemy's base, destroying its generators should be a high priority. This puts your opponent at a severe disadvantage until the generators are back in business.
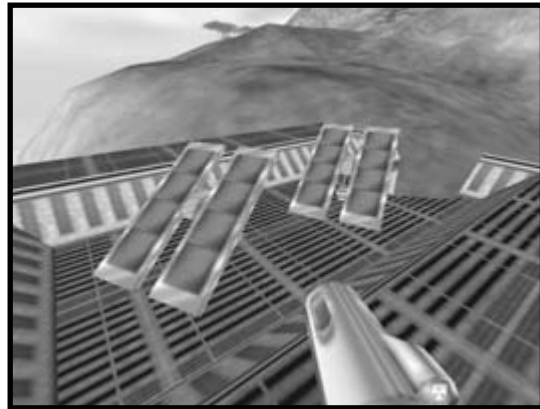

Fig. 4-14. Solar panels are rare, but they supplement generators in certain missions.

Fig. 4-13. Generators are both crucial and fragile. A few plasma rifle shots can take them out.

> **TIP**
>
> Maps with force fields usually feature specialized force field generators. Destroy these and the force fields will drop.

Some bases possess more than one generator, but they're often side by side, easily destroyed.

Some bases also possess solar panels. Destroy these solar panels in addition to generators to completely knock out the base's power.

Any weapon can destroy a generator or solar panel, but the plasma rifle is the weapon of choice because it's so fast and efficient.

Elevator Shafts

Fig. 4-15. Elevator shafts have replaced the true elevators found in the original TRIBES.

In TRIBES, bases had automatic elevators. TRIBES 2 replaces them with elevator shafts with curved tops. Just jet up the shaft to go upstairs; the curvature at the top automatically moves you onto the upper floor.

Drop mines and spider-clamp turrets in elevator shafts as a sneaky way to disrupt your enemy.

Vehicles

The vehicle selection in TRIBES 2 is much more varied than in the original. As a result, you have to play a lot more to become familiar with all the vehicles and how to operate them.

TIP

Bail out of a vehicle before it gets destroyed. If you stick around you'll take extra damage in the explosion.

Ground Vehicles

You might prefer airborne vehicles because of their excellent mobility, but ground vehicles are worthwhile, too. These vehicles are safe from antiaircraft turrets, and each performs a unique role in the TRIBES 2 game world.

TIP

All vehicles have "turbo" that's powered with the same key assigned to your jump-jets. Hold down the key for an extra burst of speed. Note that the turbo drains your energy, which effectively drains your shields and firepower. Using turbo when you're being shot at risks getting you blown up fast.

WILDCAT GRAV CYCLE

Figure 4-16. The Wildcat is small and fast.

Figure 4-17. Take it easy on the controls. They're very touchy.

Speed: High

Protection: Low

Armament: None

Crew: Driver (Scout armor only)

The Wildcat is an extremely fast land vehicle—its sole purpose is to get you places fast. This one-seater can only be piloted by players in Scout armor. The Wildcat can:

◆ Speed up your escape from the enemy flag base.

◆ Get to the enemy base quicker.

◆ Quickly get to a remote spot from which to snipe.

◆ Chase a fleeing flag carrier (and catch up with ease).

Any time you could use some extra speed, the Wildcat can help. Its controls are twitchy and it's extremely fragile, but the extra speed is worth it.

Your team can purchase a large number of Wildcats on most missions allowing vehicles. (Some vehicles are restricted to only a few in play at a time.)

BEOWULF ASSAULT VEHICLE

Figure 4-18. The Beowulf poses a deadly threat in any game.

Speed: Average

Protection: High

Armament: Turret-mounted plasma cannons and fusion mortar (toggle by pressing W, or 1 for plasma cannons and 2 for mortar)

Crew: Driver (Scout or Assault armor), gunner (Scout or Assault armor)

The Beowulf is a fast land vehicle geared for destruction, not transport. It's ideal for sweeping an area of the map clear of enemies, or for driving up to the enemy base, then pounding it before infiltrating.

Figure 4-19. Lack of a gunner leaves the Beowulf nearly useless.

A Beowulf without a full crew is pointless; only the gunner can operate the weapons. The gunner sits in a turret with a full 360 degrees of rotation, equipped with fast-firing plasma cannons for taking down close-range targets and a fusion mortar for pounding medium-to-long-range ground targets.

Why take the Beowulf? First, its tough shields and good weapons make you tough to kill in any situation. Second, the mortar demolishes enemy bases and structures—and you don't have to wear sluggish Juggernaut armor. Finally, the Beowulf is a threat that the enemy must deal with, because it can clear away turrets with ease. Your teammates will have more opportunities to attack while you command the enemy's attention.

The Beowulf is susceptible to missile launchers and aerial attacks. The driver or gunner can leap out and use a missile launcher to deal with aerial argets, however.
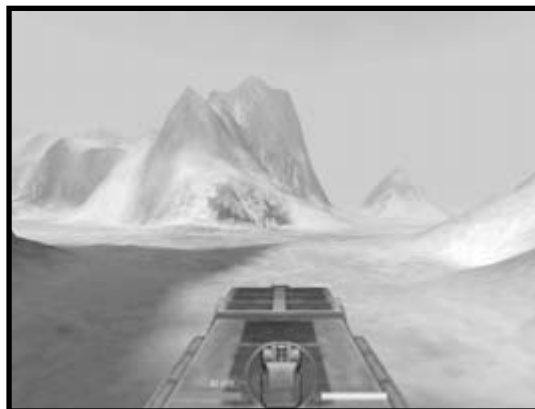
Jericho Forward Base

Figure 4-20. The Jericho is fun to drive but slow.

Speed: Low
Protection: High
Armament: Missile turret (only when deployed)
Crew: Driver (Scout or Assault armor)

The Jericho forward base is so powerful that it's not even permitted on certain maps that otherwise allow vehicles. On those that do, you'll be given only one at a time; you can't buy a second Jericho until the first one is destroyed. That's because it's a very powerful tool.

Figure 4-21. The fun begins when the driver gets out.

The Jericho possesses no attack capabilities. It's slow and has trouble driving over rough terrain. Only when the driver leaps out does it become useful, deploying a missile turret for self-defense and an inventory station for fast supplies in enemy territory.

Park the Jericho close enough to the enemy base to serve as a staging area for short-range attacks; place it in a valley or behind a ridge, though, so the enemy can't easily destroy it from their base. Make them come out and fight.

Drop a beacon on your Jericho after it's parked, so your teammates can see where it is. Defend it, because it's a thorn in the other team's side as long as it's around.

Air Vehicles

Aerial vehicles are great for their mobility and freedom from terrain restrictions. They're highly vulnerable to missile launchers and missile turrets, but that's their only weakness.

Shrike Fighter

Speed: High
Protection: Low
Armament: Twin blasters
Crew: Pilot (Scout or Assault armor)

The Shrike is fast and preferable to the Wildcat for speedy transport on extreme terrain. (On more level terrain the Wildcat is often a better bet.)

The Shrike is useful for its speed, though it does have rudimentary weapons, and with skill you'll be able to collide with enemy players and mow them down. Still, the weapons aren't deadly, so the Shrike's offensive capabilities tend toward distraction and harassment rather than destruction.

Since the Shrike can be used by players in Assault as well as Scout armor (while the Wildcat can only be used by Scouts), it offers speedy transport to a wider range of players than the Wildcat.

Figure 4-22. The Shrike is fast and has limited attack capabilities.

Figure 4-23. Be careful with the controls, because it's easy to crash.

Thundersword Bomber

Speed: Average

Protection: Average

Armament: Twin plasma cannons, bombs

Crew: Pilot (Scout or Assault armor), bomber (Scout or Assault armor), tailgunner (any armor)

The Thundersword is a destructive flying weapons platform. It forces the enemy to equip its base with missile turrets and grab missile launchers or suffer the consequences.

This craft isn't speedy, but it packs great punch. The pilot concentrates on flying, while the gunner toggles between a pair of potent plasma cannons (slow but deadly projectiles) and guided bombs. The bombs are extra deadly, capable of destroying anything beneath the bomber. Flying over an enemy base, a capable Thundersword crew can level it in mere seconds.

The tailgunner spot has no built-in weapons, but the tailgunner can use his own weapons—so if you pack a Juggernaut with a fusion mortar into that position, you can deal amazing damage. Also, the tailgunner can use his missile launcher to deal with other flying craft that might otherwise harass the Thundersword.

Use the Thundersword as a pure attack platform, or as the first stage of a base raid—the second stage being when you jump out and infiltrate the base on foot.

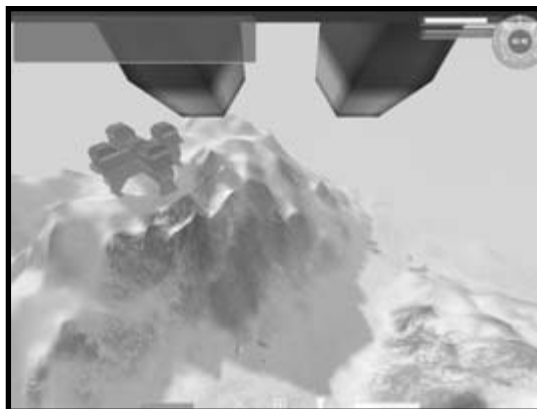Figure 4-24. The Thundersword is the ultimate attack vehicle.

Figure 4-25. Don't drop a bomb while you're on the ground, or the whole thing will blow up.

HAVOC TRANSPORT

Speed: Low

Protection: High

Armament: None

Crew: Pilot (Scout or Assault armor), tailgunner (any armor), four passengers

The Havoc is the ultimate base attack vehicle. Its greatest asset is its ability to group a big team together, then drop everyone off at the attack site. This forces everyone to attack at once and optimizes attack efficiency.

The Havoc's single tailgunner spot contains no built-in weapons, but the gunner can use his own weapons. As usual, Juggernauts are preferred, as they can use fusion mortars and missile launchers to either savage the enemy base or protect the vehicle from other vehicles.

> ### TIP
> A Juggernaut with an ammunition pack is an ideal tailgunner, if equipped with flares. A Juggernaut so equipped gets 18 flares.

But combat isn't the Havoc's strength; as we already mentioned, its strength is the ability to get lots of troops from point A to point B, safe and tightly grouped, so they can mount an extremely deadly attack.
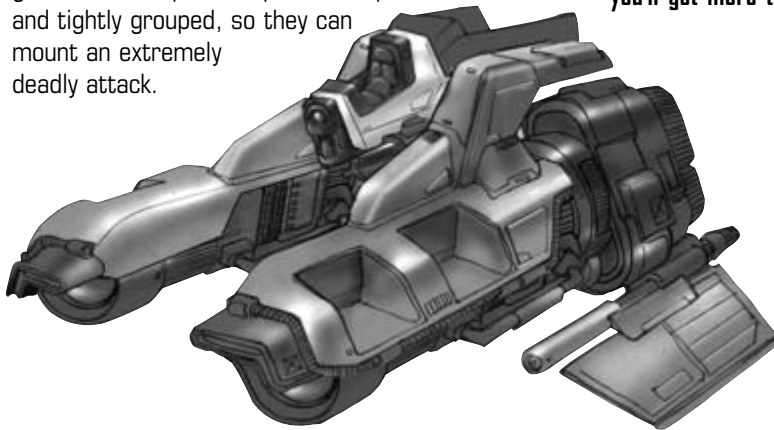
Figure 4-26. The slow Havoc proves useful in big assaults.

Figure 4-27. Don't use the Havoc unless you're sure you'll get more than two passengers.

5

Combat Basics

You won't become a great fighter just by reading a book. You CAN learn how to improve your tactics and what techniques to master, but the actual reading won't take you where you want to go. Getting better takes practice—lots of it.

This chapter explains how to get started in combat and how to improve your chances of winning, but to improve you need to start fighting. Above all, observe. Players who shut off their minds as they fight won't get much out of the experience; players who analyze what their opponents do to beat them will keep improving.

Setup

Before you jump into a multiplayer game, consider what controller to use and how to set it up. An inadequate controller or control scheme limits your abilities, and it's very hard to switch once you've grown used to one.

Choose Controllers

The mouse and keyboard combination is necessary. The mouse provides great control, allowing you to turn quickly, slowly, or any speed in between. The keyboard supplements the mouse, adding enough keys to trigger all vital combat commands.

Fig. 5-1. Configure your controls before playing.

Don't use joysticks. They don't offer the full range of motion and precise degree of control of a mouse. High-quality analog joysticks might suffice, but they're not nearly as precise as a mouse.

Controlling an action game with a mouse might seem unnatural at first, but you'll grow comfortable with it—and the benefits will become apparent.

Configure Your Controls

Mastery of the controls is key in TRIBES 2. Set up a configuration that works well for you. No one configuration fits everyone perfectly; experiment to find one you like.

All vital combat commands should be within easy reach. You should seldom, if ever, have to look at the keyboard to find a command key. When you do, it should only be for relatively uncommon commands, such as dropping a weapon.

Sample Setup

This sample configuration uses a two-button mouse with a scrolling wheel, plus a keyboard. It works for us, but that doesn't mean it's ideal for you—try it, but abandon it if it doesn't suit you.

First, from the game's start menu, select Settings/Controls. Look at the mouse configuration. There aren't many options. The mouse defaults to "freelook" mode, where moving the mouse up, down, left, and right changes the direction you look. This is different from some games, in which mouse movements by default physically move your character.

> **TIP**
>
> "Freelook" is vastly superior to using the mouse for movement. It gives you a much finer degree of control and makes looking up and down very natural. You'll soon adjust to this style and never look back.

Adjust mouse sensitivity after playing the game and determining how the controls feel. Don't set it TOO low, or you'll have trouble turning without exaggerated, sloppy mouse movements.

Check the Invert Y-Axis box, also found on this menu. It inverts your vertical movements, so that pulling back translates into "look up," and pushing forward means "look down." See if it makes sense to you. If you're used to flight simulators, it may.

> **TIP**
>
> If you're used to inverting the y-axis in games of this type, brake the habit. You'll have more intuitive control and much easier aiming, especially when small adjustments (such as with the laser rifle) are necessary. Therefore, don't invert the y-axis, even though you can be successful either way.

Now it's time to set up keys. Your right hand controls the mouse. Mouse buttons are set up as follows:

◆ Mouse movement controls your orientation.

◆ Right mouse button is Forward.

◆ Left mouse button is Fire Weapon.

◆ Center mouse button (pressing on the wheel) is Zoom.

◆ The wheel cycles through weapons.

Your left hand rests on the keyboard, with your index finger on ⌶.⌷ and your pinkie on ⌷N⌷. The main row of keys is as follows:

⌷/⌷: Use Pack   ⌷.⌷: Strafe Right

⌷,⌷: Strafe Left   ⌷M⌷: Backward

⌷N⌷: Jump-Jet   ⌷B⌷: Throw Grenade

Note that you have to stretch your pinkie to throw a grenade.

Below this row a couple of buttons are very easy to press:

Right ⌷Alt⌷: Use Health Kit

⌷Spacebar⌷: Jump

Slap the space bar with your palm and presses Right ⌷Alt⌷ with your thumb, so you don't need to move your fingers to access these functions.

Finally, the row above the main row contains several useful but slightly less used commands:

⌷;⌷: Command Circuit

⌷I⌷: Drop Mine

⌷k⌷: Toggle Microphone

These aren't all the available commands, but they include the most crucial combat and combat-related functions. With this setup it's possible to easily access all the commands necessary to fight, plus a couple of other

common commands. Other commands are less frequently used, so it's not a problem if they're harder to access.

> **TIP**
>
> If you frequently switch from first-person to third-person view mode, bind the First/ Third Person Toggle command to something easily accessible.

This is not everyone's ideal configuration. Use it as a point of reference. Having a model to refer to may help you, even if the model isn't exactly what you want.

Get Comfortable with the Controls

After you've settled on a configuration, stick with it and practice. If a particular command needs to be moved because it's hard to access, move it as soon as you identify the problem, then keep practicing.

Only when the controls become second nature will you start to excel at TRIBES 2.
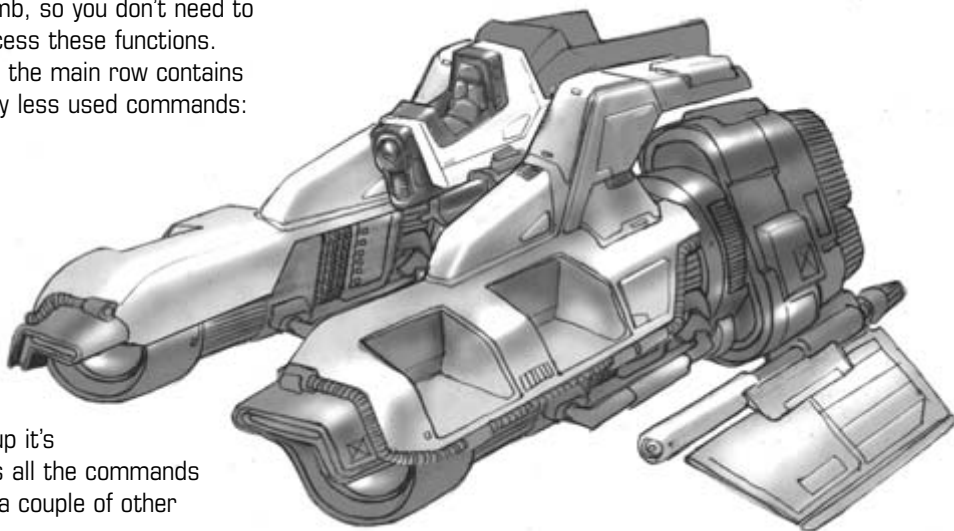
FIGHT PRELIMINARIES

Now that you have your controls set up and you're fairly used to them, you can jump into a game and at least not worry about fumbling for the right key. But more preparations await.

Scan the Area

Fig. 5-2. The image enhancer reveals enemies that aren't otherwise visible.

TRIBES 2 features huge, multilevel game environments. This means your enemies won't always be readily visible. They may be aiming a laser rifle at you from a hilltop, skulking behind a ridgeline, or using a cloaking pack to avoid detection. They may be standing above or below your base, safe from radar detection, waiting for an opportune moment to strike.

Even if you detect an enemy, if you fail to observe your surroundings you might not notice his or her teammates. TRIBES 2 is a team game, and getting attacked by more than one player at once is a serious risk. Even players with great combat skills will have trouble continually fighting against superior odds.

Situational awareness is big in TRIBES 2. Develop techniques for staying aware of your surroundings. The most common methods are to keep scanning the terrain, to periodically check the map in the command circuit, and to occasionally jet up in the air and spin around, thus gaining an elevated perspective to spot hidden enemies.

Also, deploy sensors that expand your team's detection network. The better that network is, the less work you have to do to find the enemy.

Learn the Matchups
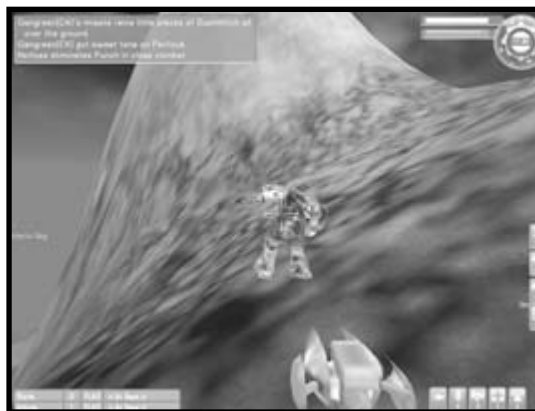
Fig. 5-3. Don't invite bad situations, like walking alone in Juggernaut armor on a relatively flat map.

Don't walk into fights you're ill-equipped for. If you understand the advantages and limitations of each weapon and armor type, and the danger of attacking players in strong positions, you can avoid disadvantageous situations.

For example, rarely attack two or more enemies by yourself. Even if you have great skills, that's a fight that's difficult to win. You could, however, harass both enemies if you have Scout armor and good movement skills, perhaps drawing them away from their current location.

You should know better than to march into the open in Juggernaut armor. Skilled players will cut you down from long range. On the flip side, if you're wearing Scout armor and fighting someone in Juggernaut armor, don't get too close and don't stand around. Get airborne and fight from a distance. Capitalize on your opponent's lack of mobility; don't get close, where he or she can easily shoot you.

Keep Moving

Beginners tend to stand still when fighting. Standing still makes you an easy target. You won't live very long if you take that sort of pounding!

Fig. 5-4. Movement is crucial to success in combat.

Lack of movement also makes you extremely vulnerable to sniper fire and long-range fusion mortar attacks. In combat, movement is preferable to standing still.

Run Away if Necessary

Be prepared to run away from any fight. Of course, this isn't feasible if you're wearing Juggernaut armor and you're being harassed by someone in Scout armor. But try to retreat to terrain that's bumpier, where you can hide and be protected more than you would in the open.

Remember, most TRIBES 2 games aren't won or lost based on kills. They're based on completing your objectives. Never be afraid to run away.

Movement Fundamentals

In a fight, winning is closely tied to movement. Choosing a good weapon and aiming are also crucial—and these skills will come with time—but what sets beginners apart from veterans is lack of mobility. Beginners concentrate so much on aiming that they forget to move.

Practice the techniques below to move effectively in combat.

Learn to Strafe

Strafing, in action-game terms, means moving your character sideways. This is different from turning. Turning actually turns around your viewpoint, whereas strafing slides your whole virtual body sideways while you continue to face the same direction. Press the left Strafe key to slide out of the path of an incoming projectile; press the Strafe Right key to slide back to where you were.

Strafing is usually preferable to turning in a fight; it allows you to move sideways and dodge incoming shots while keeping your eyes glued on your target. In a long-range firefight—for example, a fight involving blasters and laser rifles—a little strafing goes a long way toward keeping you alive. Strafe to either side to avoid incoming projectiles, then strafe back to center position and fire a few shots.

Learn to Run Backward

Though less crucial than strafing, running backward can be valuable. It's easiest to do using a mouse to control movement.

While running forward (i.e., holding down your Forward key), simultaneously take your finger off the Forward key and whip your mouse sideways so you turn 180 degrees. A split second later, press and hold down the Backward key. You're now running backward.

When is this trick useful? Let's say you run into a group of enemies. Retreating is the best course of action, but you don't want your pursuers to get too comfortable. Running backward lets you return fire as you retreat so they can't pick you off at their leisure.

> **TIP**
>
> To escape, add jump-jets to the mix. Read on for details.

Learn to Use Jump-Jets

Fig. 5-5. Jump-jets are crucial in combat; use them as frequently as possible, and concentrate on staying airborne.

Jump-jets are absolutely necessary in combat. The lighter your armor, the more you need to use the jets—but even Juggernaut armor wearers should use them in combat.

The incredibly mobile Scout armor, in particular, allows you to jet high into the air. It's very hard to hit someone who's airborne, both because of that player's speed and because there's no ground nearby to shoot explosives to cause splash damage.

Also, it's easier to aim weapons from the air. The spinfusor, for example, is hard to aim from the ground; it's tricky getting the disc to hit the player directly, and hitting the ground near the player's feet requires an exact angle. Shooting from the air, however, makes the angle much more favorable.

Regardless of your armor type, spend as much time as possible in the air. Sideways movement is useful, but vertical movement is better; get far enough away from the ground that explosives won't catch you in their blast radius. Also, the more you jet vertically instead of horizontally, the more time you'll spend in the air.

The bottom line: use jump-jets in combat. Jetting is much more effective than strafing alone; it's best to combine jumping with a little strafing so that you catch major air and also move sideways. This makes you virtually untouchable while you're airborne.

Learn to Fire and Spin while Jetting

Use your jets constantly. It takes a while to learn them inside out and develop an instinctive feel for how high and how far they'll take you. After you're comfortable, add to your jetting repertoire by spinning around, firing at airborne targets, and observing the land below you.

Beginning jetters suffer tunnel vision, concerned only with jumping to the spot they want to reach; that's pretty hard all by itself. But again, it gets easier with time. The more comfortable you are with jumping, the more you can do while airborne. Experienced players remain completely aware as they jet, and they continue to do the same things in the air—shooting, strafing, spinning—that they do on the ground.

Skiing

Skiing allows you to move very quickly on rough terrain. It's vital for running away from the enemy, closing the gap quickly, or gaining separation so you can use long-range weapons.

If you hold the Jump key while going down a slope, you'll ski. You'll speed up dramatically, gain momentum, and lose a little bit of control over your direction. Your momentum carries you somewhat beyond the actual slope.

To cross terrain quickly, practice skiing. Ski down a slope, holding the Jump button as you start to slide toward an upslope. Jump-jet to get over the upslope, and then ski down the next downslope. Repeat this process to quickly move across the map.

Skiing isn't only for downslopes. You can "power ski" UP a slope by holding down the Jump-Jet key, the Forward button, and the Jump button simultaneously. This works even if you have no energy; as your energy slowly recharges you'll get small microbursts from your jets, which help propel you up the slope.

Some upslopes are too steep or "sticky" on which to effectively power-ski. In these cases, jet vertically to get over the slope or just run up it.

> **TIP**
>
> The lighter your armor, the better you can ski. Energy packs help, too.

Circle- Strafing

Circle-strafing is the fighting style of choice in most 3D action games. That isn't quite the case with TRIBES 2, but we explain it here because it's occasionally useful.

What Is Circle-Strafing?

Circle-strafing takes basic strafing a step farther, but from a conceptual standpoint it's pretty simple.

To circle-strafe an immobile target, hold down either the left or right Strafe key while facing that target. You start sliding off in one direction.

As you slide, your target slips out of your field of view, but you want to keep looking at the target as you move. To do this, keep holding the Strafe key and simultaneously slide the mouse to turn your view back toward the target. If you're strafing to the left, slide the mouse to the right to keep the target in view, and vice versa.

As you strafe, turn yourself to keep the target in view: It's an ongoing process.

You're actually moving in a circle. Your constant efforts to keep the target in view have caused you to run circles around it. Congratulations, you're circle-strafing!

Figure 5-6. Circle-strafing is most useful in cramped quarters, where jump-jetting is difficult.

Of course, for this tactic to be of any use you have to fire at the target while circling it. Aiming while running takes a little practice. Your opponent might also try to circle-strafe.
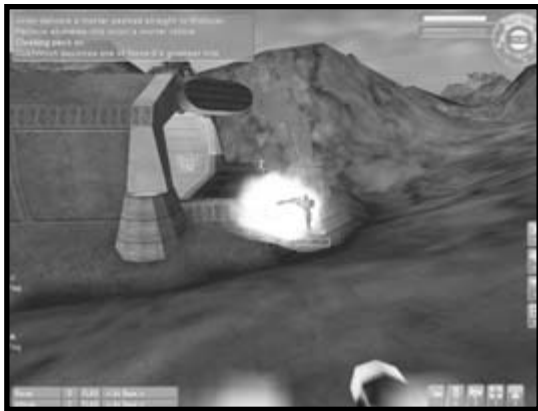
Figure 5-7. Circle-strafing put to the test.

Why Circle-Strafe?

What's the point of circle-strafing? It keeps you in perpetual motion, which makes you a lot harder to hit. Enemies have to lead you with their shots, which is trickier than firing at a motionless target.

Of course, your movement initially makes it harder for you to hit your target. But you'll gradually learn to fire accurately on the run—and since you know exactly what you're planning to do before you do it, you'll have an easier time hitting enemies than they'll have hitting you.

Adapting Circle-Strafing for TRIBES 2

In most action games, lateral movement is the best way to avoid shots. Because TRIBES 2 features jump-jets, which allow you to move vertically, pure circle-strafing is fairly obsolete. Jumping vertically makes you much harder to hit than running laterally.

The key, then, is to incorporate parts of circle-strafing into your jump-jetting routine. Circle-strafing while airborne signifies an extremely effective fighter.

Advanced Fight Techniques

Combat in TRIBES 2 is highly situational; the best tactics depend largely on the circumstances. The following sections examine specialized fighting techniques for specific situations.

Sniping
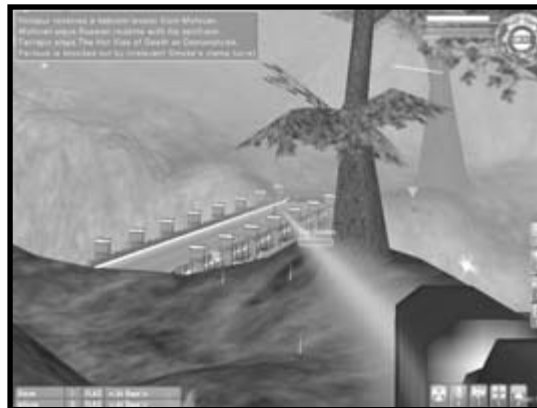
Fig. 5-8. Sniping is both fun and valuable; it prevents enemies from holding one position too long and penalizes players for using Juggernaut armor in bad spots.

Sniping is a fairly easy way to pick off enemies, especially those that don't know you're there.

First, get up on a high point. If you can avoid detection, so much the better; unwary targets move less than ones that know of your presence. Ridgelines are great for sniping because you can slide back down the other side to quickly hide.

Next, zoom in with the image enhancer. If you don't have a good shot right away, be patient. Missing with the first shot often gives away your position.

After you take a shot, sneak back behind cover. Players who have just been shot will look for the source; it's best not to be visible at that time.

> **TIP**
>
> **If you pick a spot near a deployable inventory station, you can quickly heal yourself between sniping sessions.**

After hiding for a few moments, pop up again and take another shot. Most skilled enemies won't stand around and let you shoot them a second time, but if you did a good enough job of hiding they might think you left the area.

Be aware that sniping leaves you open to enemy sniping. Because you're immobile when you fire at the enemy, other snipers have a perfect shot at you. Scout the area as thoroughly as possible before starting to snipe, or you'll find yourself on the wrong end of the laser rifle.

Jet Fighting

Players in all armor types need to learn to use their jets, but Scout-armored players especially can make jetting while fighting an art form. Stay airborne during combat, especially in Scout armor.

Little tricks like jumping before jetting to get extra lift, or tapping the Jump-Jet key instead of holding it down to let energy build back up, will soon become second nature.

Never allow yourself to become complacent and remain on the ground longer than necessary. If this happens, either prod yourself into action or choose a less mobile armor type so you aren't wasting your Scout armor's biggest asset.

Alternate Weapons

The spinfusor is the most common weapon in the game, for good reason. It's versatile and powerful. But you can give yourself the advantage in a typical outdoor fight by breaking the typical rhythm of bouncing up and down, jetting, and firing your spinfusor.

For a change, switch to the chaingun and stick close to the enemy. Alternately, switch to a missile launcher and pick the enemy out of the sky. Experiment with different weapon types to throw your foes off their game.

Interior Fighting

Fig. 5-9. Indoor fights require specialized tactics.

Interior fights have their own set of rules, especially in enclosed spaces. Heavier armor rules the corridors; if you're in Scout armor, master the art of firing and retreating.

Grenade launchers are a particularly crucial weapon indoors because they let you hit enemies hiding behind corners—or at least flush them out.

Lightly armored players should retreat quickly and approach heavily armored players from unexpected directions, in hopes of getting in a few quick cheap shots. Cloaking packs help, but plasma rifles and grenade launchers are ideal weapons.

Heavily armored players fighting lightly armored foes should use explosive weapons such as fusion mortars and spinfusors, which are very effective against Scout armor, have a good blast radius, and bounce victims around, disorienting them slightly.

When two lightly armored foes meet indoors, the chaingun can be effective, as can the spinfusor. The plasma rifle is always a good indoor weapon, because it fires faster than the spinfusor and thus deals damage faster.

Using Terrain

Learn to use the terrain as you fight. Particularly, observe these rules:

◆ Don't let your enemy stand on higher ground. The higher you are, the more movement options open up for you.

Fig. 5-10. Stick to the high ground while fighting.

◆ Standing on or near ridgelines helps; you can drop off either side of the ridge, use the ridge to block enemy fire, or jump to a great height.

◆ On a steep hillside, mentally draw a line that starts with your opponent, continues until it hits you, and then goes slightly past you. If the line connects with the slope behind you just a few feet after hitting you, you're in a bad spot. The enemy can fire an explosive weapon such as a spinfusor or plasma rifle, and even if the projectiles miss you they will hit the ground behind you and do splash damage. In this situation, jump away from the hillside to a spot where there's no ground directly behind you.

Exploiting Vulnerabilities

As you become more accustomed to various armor and weapons, understanding their capabilities, you get a better grasp of how to exploit enemies' weaknesses based on their armor and weapons choices. There are too many instances to list, but here are a few examples.

◆ When an enemy tries to gun you down with a chaingun, seek cover briefly, then pop out again. The chaingun takes a moment to start firing, and if you're under cover your opponent usually stops firing until you reappear. That gives you time to reappear and return fire for a moment before the chaingun starts up again.

◆ If your enemy fires a grenade launcher at you, stand on a nearby slope. The grenades usually bounce away, making you hard to hit.

◆ When enemies in Scout armor get too fancy with their jump-jet tactics, shoot walls or ridgelines behind them with the spinfusor, or use the ELF projector to quickly drop them, then switch to the spinfusor for an easy shot. If you have a missile launcher, drop them from the sky.

◆ Stay well away from enemies in Juggernaut armor, and ping then with laser rifle or blaster fire. Use your mobility to disappear behind an obstacle, then reappear somewhere unexpected.

◆ Get extremely close to opponents in Juggernaut armor who use the heavy mortar on you. Then, jet away at top speed when the mortar shell is fired. Often you can get an overeager foe to kill him- or herself with the blast.

◆ Sink back to longer range when enemies fire the plasma rifle at you. Then switch to the spinfusor, which shoots faster projectiles than the plasma rifle and has a better blast radius.

The list goes on. Keep your eyes open and pay attention to how your enemies kill you—partic-ularly when they dispatch you with ease. Usually their choice of weapons and tactics is predicated on the weapons and armor you're using; this is the best way to learn which weapons and armor fit a given situation.

Teamwork

There's a limit to how good you can be on your own. Teamwork improves your effectiveness instantly, without requiring lots of work on tricky combat skills. Just having a friend to distract the enemy makes him or her more likely to forget about your presence and make a mistake.

For combat purposes, the first and most important step is a partner system. Stick close to your teammates, and go about your tasks in pairs and trios instead of all alone. Again, just having someone to help you fight, even if no tactics have been agreed upon, can really make a difference.

Fig. 5-11. Teamwork improves your effectiveness.

After you have friends, more sophisticated teamwork is possible. For example, one teammate can ground an enemy with an ELF projector while the other goes for the kill. Or, one teammate can carry a sensor jammer pack to protect both from being detected.

The exact degree of teamwork you achieve depends on how well you know your teammates and how effectively you communicate with them. A local area network (LAN) encourages the most communication, because teammates can talk to one another. On the Internet, communication is harder; you need to play with people you know and continue to play with them over time. Eventually you get used to their styles of play.

> **TIP**
>
> If you have a microphone, use it. Talking is a much more efficient way of communicating than typing.

Getting Better

Fig. 5-12. Use observer mode to watch good players and learn from them.

This chapter points you in the right direction, but it won't take you all the way to greatness. The best way to improve and learn new techniques is simply to play and to keep watching your enemies.

In particular, study the players that make you angry. Chances are, they're making you angry because they're beating you. Pay attention to the ways they kill you—the armor type, the weapons, the footwork.

To do even more homework, join a game and observe instead of playing. Look for a particularly skilled player and lock onto him or her. Just watch that player think about what you see.

Every time the player kills an enemy or achieves an objective, consider why it happened. Perhaps the player paid more attention to surroundings, used armor that was more suited to the situation, or stayed in the air longer than the opponent. Hundreds of subtle tricks and skills are hard to describe but easy to grasp if you see them in action. Watch your enemies carefully, and you're certain to learn.

6

Key Concepts

This chapter explores concepts central to TRIBES 2. We've already looked at specific weapons, armor types, vehicles, and landscape features, not to mention fighting tactics. This chapter doesn't cover specifics but instead presents general information about how the game works. Understanding these concepts will keep you from wasting time trying tactics that simply don't work in the game environment.

Inventory Management

Before you get into the action, adjust your inventory packages. Pressing [Enter] on the numeric keypad accesses these packages.

The default packages include Scout Assassin, Assault Defense, Juggernaut Deployer, and so forth. All are useful and effective, but not all suit the way you play.

Fig. 6-1. The default equipment packages are good, but adjust them to suit your style of play.

Establishing Favorites

Intuitive inventory package selection increases with experience. As you play certain roles, like sniper, defender, or deployer, you find yourself wishing you had certain things or were using slightly different equipment. For example, after deploying base turrets and infrastructure wearing Juggernaut armor, you may wish for Assault armor instead, because it's taking you too long to move around. Or, as a flag runner, you might decide that whiteout grenades would aid your getaway.

We can't anticipate what inventory packages you'll need, but following are a few suggestions to get you started.

Typical Packages

Fig. 6-2. Our stealth packages usually include Scout armor, a cloaking pack, a plasma rifle, and whiteout grenades.

When taking a deployer role, we prefer the faster Assault armor to the sluggish Juggernaut armor. We take an inventory station first, plunk it down in the middle of the spot we're going to cover, and then use it to get turrets and sensors.

In assassin packages we always take Scout armor, cloaking pack, and the shocklance, obviously, but the plasma rifle is just as vital. It's a great interior weapon, and it's useful for taking down generators and turrets. We also favor whiteout grenades for helping us escape when we get overmatched, and a spinfusor for general combat.

For flag-running purposes, we take Scout armor, an energy pack, spinfusor, plasma rifle, and grenade launcher. The grenades soften up interior areas before we charge in. If we take a vehicle for speed, we sometimes substitute an ammo or cloaking pack for the energy pack.

To defend a base without cloaking, determine your role. If you're defending the flag, take light armor and an energy pack to keep up with anyone who grabs it. A chaingun and spinfusor are absolute musts for chasing those flag stealers.

For more general-purpose defense, choose heavier armor. Juggernaut armor can carry so many weapons that there's no need to be picky; the fusion mortar and missile launcher fit certain situations perfectly.

On general-purpose offense, we stick with Scout or Assault armor. We like ammunition packs more in this game than in the original TRIBES because they hold two repair kits. Occasionally we take a repair pack in Juggernaut armor, because we're likely to survive individual combats but need repairs.

Vehicle Management

Vehicles play an important part in TRIBES 2, but their power is easily misused. These concepts maximize their potential.

Take Vehicles Immediately

Fig. 6-3. Leaving vehicles on or near the launch area interferes with the purchase of new vehicles.

If you want a vehicle, get it—but don't leave it sitting on the vehicle pad. Take it immediately, or else your teammates won't be able to buy anything else.

Understand Vehicle Limits

The game limits the number of vehicle purchases; the exact number varies from map to map. If, for example, there's a limit of three on Thunderswords, then your team can only have three at a time. If you want a new one, you have to wait until one of the existing three is destroyed.

The more powerful the vehicle, the tighter the limits. On many maps you can have only one extremely potent Jericho Forward Base. Some maps don't let you have them at all.

Choose Vehicles Wisely

Since vehicles are limited, be careful about when you buy them and how you use them.

Small vehicles like Wildcats and Shrikes aren't that important; you can usually take one, ride it somewhere, ditch it, and not think twice about it. But the larger vehicles are precious resources. Don't take a Thundersword for solo transport across the map. Similarly, don't take a Jericho unless you plan to drive it to a very useful spot, park it, drop a beacon on it, and even defend it. The fewer of a given vehicle your team can have, the more careful you should be.

THE COMMAND CIRCUIT

Fig. 6-4. The command circuit map is a vital resource.

Command circuit functions include checking your team's sensor network for enemies and determining where you are in relation to various team assets.

What the Map Shows

The map shows you enemies that exist on the sensor network, as well as all team assets (permanent and deployed), IF you have selected the appropriate tabs. If you collapse a particular tab, those items won't show up on the map.

The map tells you where your teammates and some of your enemies are. With experience you'll learn what people are up to based solely on this map view. An enemy approaching your base at astronomical but constant speeds is probably piloting a Wildcat or Shrike; a group of teammates moving across the map is usually looking to press home an attack.

What the Map Doesn't Show

The map doesn't show enemy assets, nor does it show all enemies, only those who have been added to your sensor network. (More on the sensor network later in this chapter.) Therefore, don't read the map literally. Just because the map doesn't show any enemies near your base doesn't mean there are none in the vicinity.

Issuing Orders

Fig. 6-5. Issuing orders to your whole team is fast and ensures that everyone gets vital information.

The simplest and most direct way to assign your team a necessary task is to select the item or player you want to affect (in the command circuit view), right-click on it, and select the appropriate action from the pop-up menu. For example, to have a generator repaired, find it in the assets list, right-click on it, and select "Repair." If no individual teammate is selected, your team receives a general order.

If you have extra time or know with certainty whom to send the order to, you can give orders to individuals instead of the group. But group orders are a good, fast way of getting the message out to the widest possible audience, hopefully completing an important task.

Controlling Items

Fig. 6-6. Controlling turrets can be useful, but don't spend TOO much time with them.

You can take control of cameras and turrets by clicking on a "control square" to the right of the item's name. This takes you to a view from that camera or turret. As a beginner you shouldn't spend much time controlling either.

Cameras add enemies to the sensor network regardless of whether you're actually looking through them. The only real benefit to looking through a camera is if you placed one in a spot that gives you great forewarning of what's going on. For example, if you're hiding in a place with only one entrance and you've got a camera outside the entrance, looking through it can alert you to attackers. Or, a camera in the enemy base, near the generators, shows you if they're in working order (and thus need to be destroyed). But generally, don't spend much time gazing through cameras.

Controlling turrets can help if the turret is powerful and tends not to fire as much as it could. Missile turrets and mortar turrets are favorites for direct control. However, unless you're convinced that the turrets are in good position to deal serious damage, it's more valuable to your team to leave the turrets to their own devices.

The Sensor Network

Fig. 6-7. A thorough understanding of the sensor network improves your game immensely.

Each team's sensor network keeps track of enemy players. Understanding exactly how it works is crucial.

Sensor Network Basics

There are two ways to end up on the enemy sensor network. First, an enemy player sees you. Second, a piece of enemy equipment spots you.

For an enemy PLAYER to add you to the sensor network, he or she must be fairly close and looking in your general direction. Distance prevents a positive identification and keeps you from being added to the network.

For an enemy pulse sensor to detect you, you need to be inside its range and within a direct line of sight. A building or a ridge in between you and the pulse sensor blocks detection.

Enemy motion sensors detect movement inside their radius. It doesn't matter if you're behind something; motion sensors can spot you through walls. However, if you're standing still, you will not be added to the sensor network.

Finally, cameras add you to the sensor network if you walk into their line of sight.

Sensor Network Repercussions

If you are added to the enemy sensor network, two things happen. First, the enemy command circuit map tracks you. Enemies who look at their command circuit will see your position. Second, a red triangle appears above your head in the game world. This triangle lets the other team know where you are if they're looking in your general direction.

The triangle is much easier to see than an unmarked player, and it appears even if you're far away from the enemy. Thus, the enemy may be looking in your direction and not even see you because you're so far away—but because you're on the sensor network, he or she will see the red triangle and know you're there.

Being on the sensor network is generally a bad thing. The game world is so large that players depend on the sensor network to tell them where the enemy is; players on it are easy to find, while players not on it are much less readily noticed.

Cloaking Packs and Their Effects

Fig. 6-8. When you're wearing a cloaking pack, you still have to fear sentry turrets.

Cloaking packs change the rules of who and what can see you and add you to the sensor network. They function differently depending on whether they're activated or deactivated.

Even when deactivated, the cloaking pack protects you from pulse sensors. It will not, however, protect you from anything else. Therefore, while wearing a deactivated cloaking pack the following happens:

◆ Pulse sensors, both deployable and permanent, will never see you. (Except you are added to the sensor network when seen by an enemy player.)

◆ Motions sensors can still see you.

◆ Cameras can still see you.

◆ Other players can still see you.

When you activate a cloaking pack, its effects become much more pronounced. Specifically, you completely disappear from view while the cloak is engaged. Some enemies might see the faintest blur if you're moving right in front of them, but otherwise you'll be invisible. Now your situation is as follows:

◆ Pulse sensors still can't see you.

◆ Cameras can't see you.

◆ Other players can't see you.

◆ Motion sensors can still see you.

Thus, you have to fear only motion sensors when you're cloaked. This explains why base defenses always need pulse sensors; without them, the enemy can sneak in at will.

Note that even if another player sees a blur, or suspects that you're around, he or she can't add you to the sensor network. Only motion sensors can add you to the sensor network while you're cloaked.

Sensor Jammer Packs and Their Effects

Sensor jammer packs differ from cloaking packs, because they protect you from different sorts of detection. They're simpler to understand than cloaking packs, because their effects are very absolute.

When the sensor jammer pack is deactivated, it does NOTHING. You have to activate it to enjoy its effects. While the pack is activated, the following happens:

◆ Pulse sensors cannot see you or anyone within 20 meters of you.

◆ Motion sensors cannot see you or anyone within 20 meters of you.

◆ Cameras cannot see you or anyone within 20 meters of you.

◆ You are still physically visible, so other players can see you. However, they cannot add you (or anyone within 20 meters of you) to the sensor network.

Any cloaked players in your pack's area of effect become visible, thus making the sensor jammer pack a great defensive tool for catching those infiltrators.

Only other players can see you while the jammer pack is operating. Even then, you won't be added to the sensor network. Players who see you can attack you, but you'll never appear on enemies' command circuit maps, turrets will never fire at you, and a red triangle will never appear over your head.

Too bad you lose all the benefits when your energy supply runs out!

Fig. 6-9. Sensor jammer packs render you invisible to ALL turrets.

General Sensor Awareness

Stay aware and keep tabs on what's going on around you.

◆ Always be suspicious of players with no colored triangle above their heads. They're generally foes.

◆ Drop motion sensors in key spots. Without them, cloaked players can and will be your undoing.

◆ Drop deployable motion sensors on hilltops for best coverage.

◆ Stick to high spots to locate as many enemies as possible at once. (If there are snipers around, be careful.)

◆ Use cloaking packs and sensor jammer packs to fool the enemy and get the upper hand in the sensor battle.

Not-So-Useful Team Roles

In every team game—especially Capture the Flag—a few players prove less than helpful to their team. They play a wide variety of roles, but they're always there, and they're always dead weight. Since you don't want to be one of those players, avoid the common useless roles detailed on the next few pages.

Immobile Interior Defender

Some players decide that the best way to play defender is to wear Juggernaut armor and lumber into a particular spot, then just stand there. While this can be somewhat effective in certain situations, generally you want to be more active. Immobile defenders are predictable; they might kill an attacker the first or second time, but after that the attacker figures it out and uses grenades, mortar shells, or a cloaking pack to flush out the defender or sneak up behind him or her.

Fig. 6-10. Standing in place isn't the best way to defend things.

When playing defense, don't always pick Juggernaut armor and don't always stand in the same area. Deploy defenses and sensors, move around, and consider lighter armor unless your base is very tightly enclosed.

Unprepared Flag Runner

Perhaps the most common of all useless players is the unprepared flag runner. This player immediately goes on offense, usually in light armor, and tries to grab the enemy flag with swift hit-and-run tactics.

While speed tactics sometimes work, they often don't. If the enemy is thoroughly dug in and has laid defenses properly, it's very difficult to simply jet in and grab the flag, then make a quick exit. These cases require sneaky tactics or attacks in force to level the defenses. But the unprepared flag runner doesn't understand that, hurling him- or herself into the teeth of the defense again and again, never accomplishing a thing.

Avoiding this role is simple. If you try a speed run on the enemy flag and get unceremoniously killed, reconsider your strategy. If you're certain the flag is ripe for the picking and you just got unlucky, go ahead and try again. But if the defenses are stiff, consider shifting gears and attacking in a different way.

Superfluous Sniper

Fig. 6-11. A sniper can be a team asset—or a complete waste.

A sniper or two can really help your base defense, and a sniper on offense can throw an enemy base into confusion. However, too many snipers renders your team ineffective.

In small games, such as a three-on-three game, sitting around and sniping is generally a terrible idea. With such small teams, each player has to be very active, laying defenses, destroying the enemy base, initiating flag raids, and so forth. A player just sitting somewhere with a sniper rifle won't do your team much good.

Similarly, an eight-player team with four snipers won't progress. You lack enough conventional attackers or defenders, so you won't mount effective flag raids and your base will be vulnerable to sneaky attacks.

Always consider the situation, and never become a dedicated sniper unless there's a legitimate tactical reason for it.

Self-Absorbed Pilot

Fig. 6-12. Don't fly vehicles just for the sake of flying them. Have a goal in mind.

Vehicles are useful tools on most maps, but they can become a distraction for certain would-be pilots. These overeager players leap into vehicles at the first opportunity—usually flying vehicles like the Shrike—and proceed to fly circles around the map, shooting at anything in sight.

While there's nothing wrong with using vehicles, these players aren't as directly involved in the game as someone performing the crucial tasks of attacking or defending a base. Instead, they're in a personal sub-game, where dogfighting is more important than flag capturing.

It's easy to avoid this fate. Just be sure that every time you hop into a vehicle you have a definite plan. If you find yourself flying around and dive-bombing enemies in the middle of the map just for the fun of it, consider bailing out and taking a more direct team role.

Overeager Combatant

The overeager combatant resembles the unprepared flag runner. Both are eager for action—probably too eager. They want to get to the heart of the conflict without preparing or considering whether this particular fight is useful.

The overeager combatant gets sucked into combat anywhere, anytime. You can often find this player near the middle of the map, far away from significant objectives, slugging it out with a like-minded member of the other team. What are they fighting for? What's their objective? Who knows?

Again, this problem can be avoided simply by deciding on a role and sticking with it. If you're playing defense, then by all means intercept enemies before they get near your base. But on offense, don't slow yourself down by fighting just anyone who shows up in the map's middle ground. Use some discretion and fight only when it helps your team.

Rock-Scissors-Paper Concepts

This chapter closes with a few things we call "rock-scissors-paper" concepts: facts about what works and what doesn't in the game environment. None of these are hard-and-fast rules; instead, they're guidelines to help you avoid futile situations and capitalize on how the game works.

Missiles vs. Vehicles and Aerial Targets

Fig. 6-13. Missiles are the ultimate antivehicle weapon.

Anything flying is fair game for a missile. Missile launchers and missile turrets both eat jetting players and vehicles (both airborne and ground-based) for breakfast.

Without missiles, there'd really be no downside to staying airborne all the time. Airborne players and vehicles are very hard to hit, and they have a great view of what's going on. The only drawback is their vulnerability to missiles.

Understand this fact and turn it to your advantage. If vehicles or jump-jet-crazed players harass you, take a missile launcher. It results in a lot of fast, easy kills.

On the flip side, if you're jetting a lot or flying a vehicle, be aware of the missile threat. Avoid missile turrets, carry flare grenades to distract missiles, and be prepared to bail out of a vehicle (or stop jetting) when the missiles start to fly.

Snipers vs. Non-Snipers

If you're out in the open without a laser rifle and a distant sniper has locked in on you, seek cover. It's just a fact: At extreme range, there's very little you can do if the enemy has a laser rifle and you don't. Sure, you can lob fusion mortar shells or shoot discs, but any halfway decent sniper will get out of their path. Instead, head for cover. Later, you can grab your own sniper rifle or use cover to approach and flush out the sniper at close range (giving you the upper hand).

Vehicles vs. Individuals

Without a missile launcher, it's tough to destroy vehicles gunning for you. Run until you find some friends who can help you gang up on the vehicle.

The best weapon against all vehicles is a missile launcher, though plasma rifles and fusion mortars work against slow land vehicles. Shrikes and Wildcats can be taken down with a few laser rifle shots, too. But again, if none of these weapons are available, or the vehicle is actively trying to kill you, you're better off running. This is especially true if you're facing a fully manned Beowulf or Thundersword.

Heavy Weapons vs. Heavy Targets

Fig. 6-14. The plasma rifle works great against Juggernaut armor.

The heavier the target, the heavier the weapon you'll need to effectively damage it. For example, when attacking large pulse sensors and base turrets, blasters, chainguns, laser rifles, and spinfusors will not get the job done. You need a plasma rifle, grenade launcher, missile launcher, or fusion mortar.

The same is true when you're dealing with foes in Juggernaut armor. The heavier the weapon, the more damage it deals. The plasma rifle is particularly effective against heavy armor, while the spinfusor is not.

Aerial Players vs. Ground Players

Players in the air possess a vast combat advantage over players on the ground. Fast vertical movement makes them hard to hit, and with no ground beneath them, they're immune to splash damage. They also have a great angle for firing at the player on the ground.

The bottom line is simple: Stay in the air as much or more than your opponent, move to an enclosed area where your opponent can't jump, or use a shield pack to absorb damage and then aim for your opponent when he or she hits the ground.

Superior Numbers vs. Inferior Numbers

This one's obvious, but we've seen enough one-on-three battles that it bears mentioning. Always try to fight with superior or at least equal numbers on your side. Fighting two or more enemies at once almost always gets you killed, because there's just too much to keep track of.

Of course, if you're a flag runner or a stealth player, you face superior numbers all the time. But that's different because you're not trying to fight the enemy outright. You're trying to take something and run, or sneak past all those enemies, not fight.

Deployed Defenses vs. Lone Intruders

Fig. 6-15. A good network of sensors and turrets will chew you up unless you're well prepared.

A good network of deployed turrets and sensors, with a couple of defensive players wandering around the area, will destroy lone base attackers. The exception is when the base attacker is skilled and has the following:

◆ Thorough knowledge of the enemy base, including where all the important items are, where the turrets are, and how the entrances connect to the interior.

◆ A little knowledge of the deployed defenses, either from looking at the base from afar or from being in the area before.

◆ A clear plan of attack that employs speed or stealth, or even the destruction of deployed items (if there aren't many human defenders around). Cloaking packs or sensor jammer packs are helpful.

Be sure you have a good grasp of this information before you rush a well-fortified base, or you place the odds in the enemy's favor.

Juggernaut Armor vs. Scout Armor

We end the chapter with a matchup that's NOT clear-cut: Scout armor vs. Juggernaut armor. This matchup seems obviously unfair, but isn't.

A really skilled player in Scout armor can stay airborne and mobile, pepper the less-mobile Juggernaut with weapons fire, and avoid the splash damage from the Juggernaut's heavy weapons. A really skilled Juggernaut player can minimize damage with a shield pack, use the terrain to gain an advantage, and time the Scout's descent so a weapon blast meets the adversary at the ground.

To be sure, if both players just stood around and slugged it out, the Juggernaut would win. But that's not how players in Scout armor fight.

The bottom line is to use the armor type you feel most comfortable with. As your game improves, you'll be able to beat other players regardless of what armor they're wearing.

7

Single-Player Missions

The single-player missions in TRIBES 2 aren't meant to be a full game in themselves. Rather, they accustom you to the game world and teach basic maneuvers.

The missions are very structured, with your commander constantly giving instructions. It's just a matter of getting the job done and staying alive. The walkthroughs in this chapter offer tips on how to do just that.

Charybdis

Your first training mission takes place on the world Charybdis. Your mission is to Scout for BioDerm activity. Lieutenant Kenzie gives you voice orders, updating your goals as you go along.

Fig. 7-1. Ride along until you're shot down.

You start out in a bomber. Sit back and observe. Soon, a BioDerm shoots down the bomber. You crash to the ground. When your vision clears, sit still and listen to Lieutenant Kenzie. She explains your HUD (heads-up display) interface. She locks up your armor during this, so you can't move.
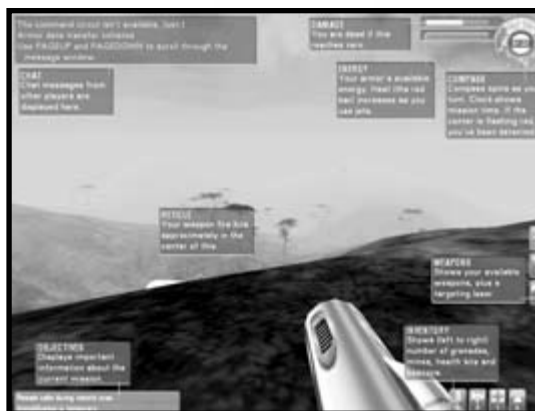
Fig. 7-2. Review your HUD functions.

When you can move again, a waypoint on your HUD reveals the location of several health patches. Locate it and run toward the health patches. Walk over them to get back to full armor.

Fig. 7-3. Restore your health.

After a short explanation of your weapons, you're assigned a new waypoint: an old Blood Eagle tower. Run toward the tower. As you do so, Kenzie tells you BioDerms lurk in the vicinity.

Two BioDerms attack. They start out with spinfusors, then switch to chainguns as they get close. Use the spinfusor to fight them.
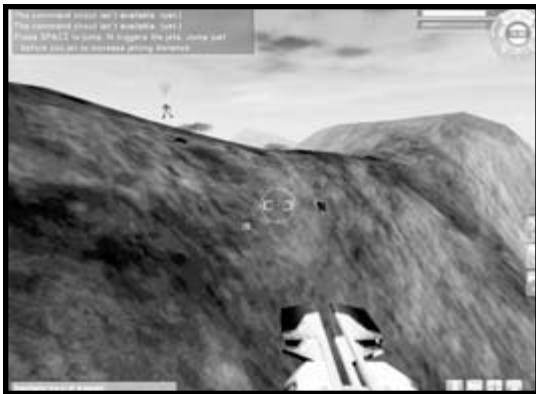
Fig. 7-4. Kill the Derms with the spinfusor.

Fig. 7-5. Grab the laser rifle.

More BioDerms approach. Switch to the laser rifle and attack as they approach. Use the Zoom function to see them better.

TIP

Stick to the high ground, jump-jetting whenever the BioDerms get close. Fire down at them, hitting the ground near them and killing them with splash damage.

When the BioDerms are dead, run across their bodies for spinfusor ammo, then continue toward the Blood Eagle tower.

Grab an energy pack and spinfusor ammo inside the Blood Eagle tower. Then jump-jet up to a higher level, where you find a laser rifle. Throw away your blaster and take the laser rifle instead. Then jet to the very top of the tower.

Fig. 7-6. Zoom in for the kill!

When the BioDerms get close, switch to your spinfusor again and take them out the same way as the last two, jetting high into the air and shooting the ground near them. Use the chaingun when they've been whittled down to little health.

After you dispatch this pair, another pair appears. Jet back to the top of the tower and use any remaining health patches. Then take this pair out however you see fit.

When they're gone, you receive a new waypoint: a Wildcat grav cycle. Run and ski there at full speed, and jump right on top of it. You're now piloting the cycle.

Fig. 7-7. This is your ticket to freedom.

Point the Wildcat at the Extraction Team waypoint that appears on your HUD, and start driving. Switch to the third-person view (with [Tab]) to get a better view of your surroundings.

Fig. 7-8. The third-person view is helpful when you're piloting vehicles.

You drive past several BioDerms. Don't let up on the accelerator! Just drive right past them. You win the mission when you reach the Extraction Team.

Sehrganda Prime

This mission is substantially harder than the first. You do, however, have help: a teammate called Dogkiller.

> **TIP**
>
> Dogkiller can be quite useful, but it's nearly impossible to ensure that he stays alive. His survival is largely a matter of chance, so don't worry too much about him. Just try to keep him alive for the first half of the mission; that's when he's most helpful.

As the mission starts, a lone waypoint appears in the distance: a tower. On your way there, a closer waypoint shows up when you discover a pulse sensor. Approach the pulse sensor. Stand near the base and hose it down with your ELF projector for a while, then quickly switch to the plasma rifle and destroy it with three or four quick shots.

Fig. 7-9. Take down the pulse sensor.

Approach the tower again. Three BioDerms wait in and around the tower. One or two are likely to be hiding in the basement; others may be patrolling outside.

Fight until no more BioDerms are visible here.

Fig. 7-10. Take down the Derms guarding the tower.

TIP

Jump up on the sloping base of the tower and fight from slightly higher ground. Turn on your shield pack and move from side to side to avoid damage.

Go inside the tower but don't go downstairs yet. Notice the repair pack on the ground. Discard your shield pack, take the repair pack, and repair both yourself and Dogkiller.

Fig. 7-11. Grab the repair pack and use it.

Fig. 7-12. Don't forget to repair your teammate!

Equip your plasma rifle and drop into the basement, where there's likely to be another BioDerm. Blast him and jet back up. Wait for him to follow and finish him off. Claim the control switch in the basement and get out.

Fig. 7-13. Capture the control switch in the basement.

Fig. 7-14. Paint the turret with a steady targeting laser beam.

Move toward the new Tower waypoint. As you approach it, you're warned of a base turret nearby.

> **TIP**
>
> **You may have to backtrack if Dogkiller isn't keeping up. If this happens, run back to meet him and then get moving again, going slowly and taking the least hilly route possible.**

Stand on the ridge across from the base turret. (Don't get too close or it will fire at you.) Zoom in to get a better view, and then paint it with your targeting laser. Hold down the trigger while Dogkiller launches four missiles at it. The fourth missile destroys it.

> **TIP**
>
> **If Dogkiller isn't around, destroy the turret with four shots from your own missile launcher.**

Now look at the Tower waypoint. Zoom in to see two BioDerm guards wandering around. Use long-range, carefully aimed spinfusor shots to get their attention, damaging them severely in the process. Let them jet toward you, and then finish them off by jetting up and planting spinfusor discs near their feet.

When both are dead, jet to the top of the tower. Collect ammo, then proceed toward your next waypoint, labeled Control Switch.

Fig. 7-15. Grab ammo from atop the tower.

The Control Switch tower has a deadly sentry turret inside, on the lower floor. Do not approach the front entrance. Instead, notice the two ledges on the upper floor. Jet up to one, blast one of the BioDerms inside, then drop back down. Fight the BioDerm outside, staying away from the front entrance.

Repeat this process if necessary, using the repair pack between fights. (Three BioDerms guard the inside.)

Fig. 7-16. Jet up to a side entrance instead of the front door.

Jet up to one of the top-floor ledges and claim the tower by touching the control switch.

Fig. 7-17. Take the control switch.

Immediately drop down the elevator shaft and use the inventory station downstairs. Take a Juggernaut defense package, get healed, and jet back up the elevator shaft.

Fig. 7-18. Visit the inventory station downstairs.

Stand right next to the control switch, looking down. Wait for more Derms to show up. They arrive in packs of three. Whenever they appear, turn on your shield pack and hose them down with the plasma rifle or grenade launcher.

Fig. 7-19. Up here, you're ready for anything.

TIP

The sentry turret softens up your foes before they reach you. You can throw mines between attacks to deal additional damage when the Derms walk over them.

Also, don't forget to throw grenades in addition to firing your plasma rifle. This useful indoor fighting technique maximizes your firepower.

After taking down a few Derms, drop back down the elevator shaft for a quick resupply at the inventory station. Then zip back up to the control switch, lay a couple more mines, and wait.

After you destroy a few more packs of incoming Derms, the mission is declared a success.

YMIR

You start out near a Shrike. Immediately hop inside it and fly toward the waypoint. Note that controlling the vehicle is a lot like controlling your warrior, save that there's a longer delay between when you point in a given direction and when the nose of the vehicle actually points that way.

Fig. 7-20. Jump into the Shrike.

Turrets fire at you as you proceed toward the waypoint. Your best defense is to continually swing the vehicle's nose up and down, up and down, like a roller coaster. Just keep doing this. It throws off the turrets' aim.

Fig. 7-21. Never fly directly at a turret.

CAUTION

Be careful about using the turbo when you're under turret fire. The vehicle's energy meter also reflects the strength of your shields, so a speed boost at the wrong time could result in your sudden and untimely destruction.

Fly more or less toward the waypoint at all times. Only veer left or right when your flight path takes you directly toward a turret; otherwise, keep flying straight at the waypoint.

TIP

The turrets are only accurate when you get close to them. If you veer left or right whenever a turret is coming up dead ahead, you'll keep your distance and be able to escape them. Also, remember to keep bobbing up and down.

Eventually you get close to the base marked with the waypoint, and you're told you can get out. Let up on the accelerator and coast into a valley slightly to the right of the base. Hop out of the Shrike when you're near the ground.

TIP

It's important to let up on the accelerator and keep the Shrike's nose fairly level. Plowing it into the ground will damage it.

Fig. 7-22. Jump out and leave the Shrike in the valley.

Approach the cluster of waypoints to find the base. Jet up to the top, where a ledge surrounds a tower. Get onto that ledge and into the tower.

Fig. 7-23. Jump up to the big tower ledge.

Inside the tower, drop down a wide elevator shaft. Now you're in a room halfway down the tower. Three shafts lead down: two narrow, one wide. Take the wide one, jetting slightly as you drop. Turn on the cloaking pack just before you hit the bottom.
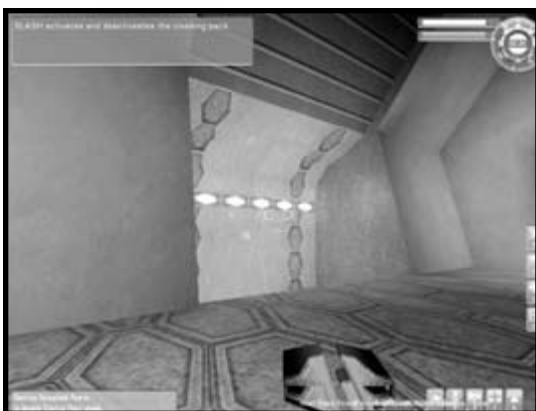
Fig. 7-24. Descend the second wide elevator shaft.

At the bottom, you're in a big room that contains the force field power generator and possibly a BioDerm guard. If the guard is here, duck behind a post, turn off your cloak, and let your energy fully recharge. Then, turn on cloaking, equip the shocklance, and run quickly behind the guard. Zap him from behind for an instant kill. He won't notice you while you're cloaked.

Fig. 7-25. Run in from behind for the instant kill.

When the guard's dead, destroy the generator with multiple shots from the plasma rifle.

Fig. 7-26. Take down the generator.

Now turn on your cloaking pack again and walk through the doorway to the generator's right. In the next room, on the right, a single guard defends a green force field. Duck behind a column, turn off the cloak to build up energy, then turn it on again and use the shocklance to take out the guard.

Fig. 7-27. Take out the guard, then claim the control switch.

You can walk through the force field because the generator's been destroyed. Now walk onto the control switch.

TIP

At this point you could seek out and destroy the generator powering the turrets outside, but you needn't bother. Try it, though, if you want more practice sneaking around with the shocklance.

Return to the room with the destroyed generator. Fly up the elevator shaft to the middle tower room, then fly up a second shaft to the room atop the tower.

Fly off the tower, toward the Shrike, which is now identified by a waypoint. Hop inside and start flying toward the waypoint labeled Extraction Point. Note that if you lose the Shrike after succeeding with the switch, you're only partly successful. One of the mission goals is to keep the Shrike intact. The turrets are still active, so remember—don't fly directly at them, and keep bobbing up and down.

Fig. 7-28. Back to the Shrike, and you're on your way.

After a while you reach safety and the mission is a success.

Fig. 7-29. Remember not to fly directly at those turrets.

Bloodjewel

This is the most free-form mission so far. You're given orders, but most of the mission is just one big siege. You're given a functional base and told to defend it, with the help of two teammates—and that's essentially your mission. You can order your teammates to perform various tasks, but more important, you can deploy lots of equipment to make your job easier.

TIP

The name of the game here is deploying equipment. A solid network of turrets and a few sensors allow your base to defend itself. Then all you have to do is sit back and watch the carnage.

As the mission starts you're told to repair a nearby pulse sensor. Jump up on the platform and repair it fully.

Fig. 7-30. Repair the pulse sensor.

Now proceed toward the base. You're told to check your command circuit. Do so and listen to the review of the various elements. Right-click the

Tycho turret and issue a "Repair" order. Your teammates will fix it.
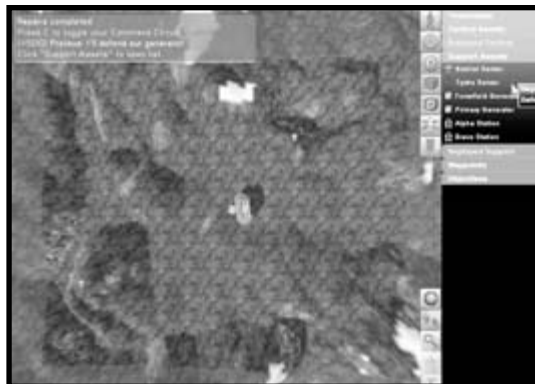
Fig. 7-31. Order your teammates to repair the other pulse sensor.

Now you're told to drop a camera. It's the same button used for dropping grenades. Do so, then switch to the command circuit and take a look through the camera. Press (Esc) to get out of the camera view.

Fig. 7-32. Drop a camera and access it from the command circuit.

Finally, you're instructed to switch to a turret view. Go to the command circuit and select the base turret. You can now fire the turret. When you're through, press Esc.

Fig. 7-33. Check out the view from the base turret.

At this point, you're finally on your own. Run inside the base and visit the lower-level inventory stations. Select the Assault deployer armor package, but change the pack from inventory station to spider-clamp turret. Place a couple of spider-clamp turrets just inside the main doorway to prevent enemies who get inside from wrecking the place.

TIP

Don't directly fight the enemy too much during this mission. Concentrate on deploying turrets, and let them do most of the damage.

Now grab a deployable inventory station. Deploy it near the doorway, so you can resupply without running too far back inside.

Fig. 7-34. Deploy spider-clamp turrets and an inventory station near the door.

Switch to landspike turrets and start placing them outside, building a ring around your base. Keep returning to the inventory station you just deployed for more turrets.

TIP

After a few landspike turrets are established outside, add yet another deployable inventory station—this one outside.

Fig. 7-35. Build up a web of landspike turrets.

When you've deployed 10 landspike turrets, deploy a few motion sensors around the base—three or four. This ensures that cloaked enemies can't get past the turrets.

Fig. 7-36. Motion sensors assist your turrets.

> ### TIP
> You can also deploy a lot of clamps inside, and then turtle on the switch with a Juggernaut and a shield pack with a deployable inventory station inside to help you heal and rearm. Eventually you'll outlast the Derms even without your generators.
> Remember to put out motion sensors to defeat those cloaked enemies!

At this point just sit back and watch the carnage. If you hit a lull in the action, feel free to Scout around the map and locate stray BioDerms—but once you find them, just shoot once or twice, then retreat to the safety of your turrets. They'll handle the rest.

After defeating several waves of enemies—

which isn't hard when your turrets do all the work—you win.

Shi-Draconis Alpha

This last mission has two parts. The first is to infiltrate and capture a tower. The second is to infiltrate a base and destroy a key generator with a satchel charge.

As the mission starts, you're near a pair of friendly inventory stations. Equip yourself with Scout armor and a sensor jammer pack.
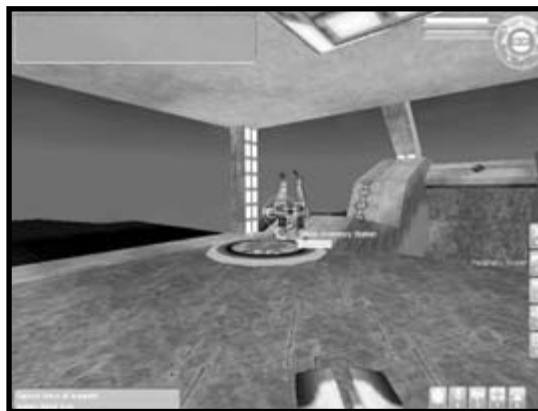
Fig. 7-37. Grab a sensor jammer pack.

Now make your way toward the waypoint called Periphery Tower Control. Two "light bridges" lead to this tower; they periodically appear and then fade away. Approach the northern light bridge. When the bridge appears, start running toward the tower.

Fig. 7-38. Wait until the light bridge appears, then run across it without hesitation.

TIP

Don't start across the bridge if it's already been up awhile. Wait until the start of the next phase.

As you get close to the tower, activate your sensor jammer pack. This protects you from the base's plasma and sentry turrets.

TIP

Jet a little if the bridge disappears just before you reach the tower.

Inside the tower, stop. Turn off your sensor jammer pack and let it recharge, but don't move around or you'll activate the nearby sentry turret's motion sensor.
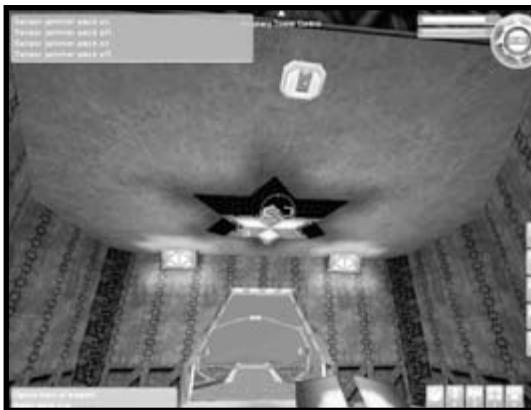
Fig. 7-39. As long as you don't move, you're safe from this sentry turret.

When your energy has replenished, turn the sensor jammer back on and jet up the elevator shaft. Upstairs is a pair of inventory stations. Ignore them for now, and let your energy recharge again.

When you have full energy, turn on the sensor jammer pack and jet up to the third level. Touch the control switch. Now you don't have to worry about the turrets anymore.
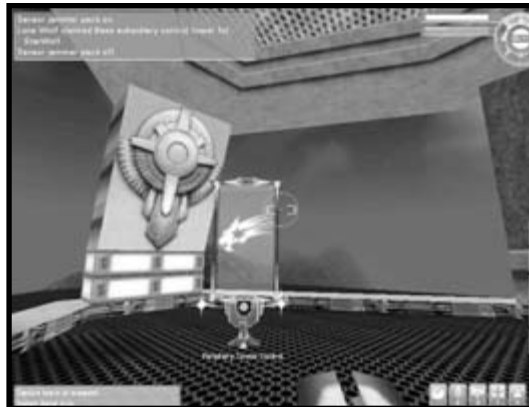
Fig. 7-40. Claim the control switch.

Go back down to the inventory stations and get yourself the following equipment: Juggernaut armor, a deployable inventory station, and a full

selection of weapons. Now drop back to the tower's base.

Take the light bridge that leads west from the tower. This one is permanent, so you don't need to worry about it disappearing beneath you.

Fig. 7-41. The bridge leading west is permanent.

Approach the BioDerm base. Jump up to the entrance of the easternmost building, avoiding the exterior plasma turrets. Follow a hallway to a T junction, take a left, and drop down the elevator shaft.

Fig. 7-42. Jump into the easternmost building.

TIP

Drop down the left side of the elevator shaft, so you don't fall in view of a spider-clamp turret downstairs.

Downstairs, a hallway leads off to the right, but there's a spider-clamp turret in it. Strafe while firing the plasma rifle at the turret until it's gone.

Fig. 7-43. Watch out for that spider-clamp turret.

Beyond the turret, the hall leads to another elevator shaft going down. Before exploring this elevator shaft, drop your inventory station nearby. Use it, and give yourself either a shield pack or an ammunition pack.

Fig. 7-44. Drop the inventory station and gear up for a battle.

Now go to the shaft's edge and look down. Blast a fusion mortar shell or two down there to clear out an unseen spider-clamp turret. Then drop down.
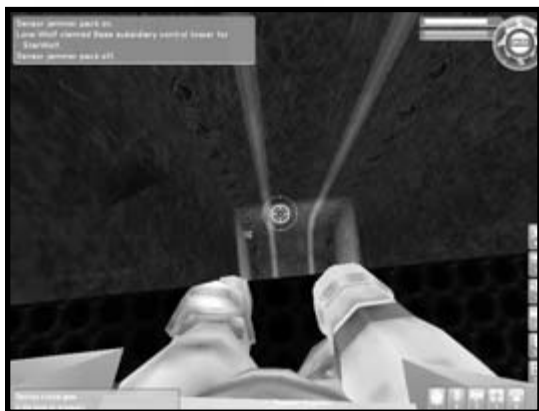
Fig. 7-45. Lob some fusion mortar shells down the shaft.

You're now on the top level of a two-level room. A generator sits nearby. A couple of patrolling BioDerms roam in the vicinity. Fight them and retreat to your inventory station for repairs afterward.

Fig. 7-46. Fight the Derms downstairs.

TIP

Be patient. Wait for the Derms to arrive. And don't be afraid to take trips back to the inventory station.

When some time has passed and no more Derms emerge, drop to the bottom level. Take the corridor underneath the room's lone generator (the corridor opposite from the shaft you entered by).

The corridor leads to a massive central chamber. Jet up to a platform at the top. A satchel charge lies here. Ignore it for now.

Fig. 7-47. Jet up to that platform.

Walk around and peer over the edges of the platform on all sides. Destroy any spider-clamp turrets and deployable sensors you can see below. If you see any Derms, shoot them too.

Now drop your current pack and equip the satchel charge.

Fig. 7-48. Grab the satchel charge.

Drop to the very bottom of this room. The twin generators you must destroy are down here, probably guarded by a Derm and maybe another spider-clamp turret. Use your plasma rifle or mortar to kill the Derm, and take out the turret as well.

Now that the coast is clear, drop your satchel charge directly between the two generators. Don't detonate it yet.
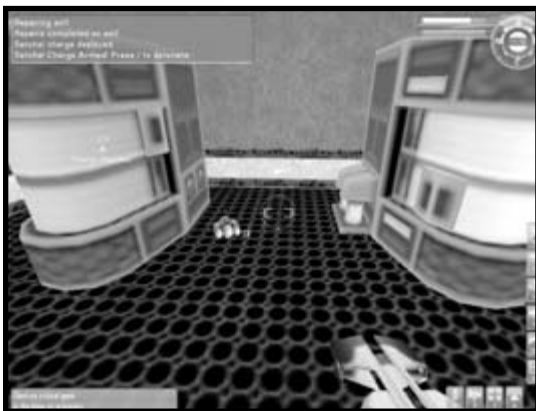
Fig. 7-49. Place the satchel charge between the two reactor generators—but wait to detonate it.

Jet back up to the room's second level and backtrack to your inventory station. Don't use it, though; your old satchel charge will disappear if you take a new pack!

From here, jet up and out of the base. Backtrack across the light bridge to the tower. Now detonate the satchel charge.

A timer indicates you don't have much time to escape. Don't worry about it. If you want, you can switch to Scout armor and jet back to your starting point, but you'll be safe in the tower. Soon the base blows up, and your mission is a success.

Fig. 7-50. Be a long way from the base when you detonate the satchel charge. To be absolutely sure, return to the tower in the lava lake first.

8

Starting Out in Multiplayer Games

This chapter provides tips on getting started in multiplayer games. The straightforward advice is designed to help you survive while you're still learning the ropes.

PREPARE

Fig. 8-1. Host a game and run through the map alone. This teaches you where things are.

Before you try multiplayer games, prepare by following these tips:

◆ Read the manual and the first few chapters of this guide.

◆ Beat all five training missions at medium.

◆ Host a solo game and get to know the maps.

◆ Practice jetting and skiing on an empty map.

These things increase your chances of survival when you first enter a multiplayer game. Without them, you'll still get the hang of things in time, but you'll endure much more frustration along the way.

Deathmatch

Deathmatch games are the simplest, conceptually. The combat is tough, though, and you can't avoid it. Here's a list of Deathmatch techniques:

◆ Stick to the spinfusor until you're familiar with other weapons.

◆ Choose energy packs at first. They give you an advantage in typical up-and-down spinfusor battles.

Fig. 8-2. Deathmatches form an exercise in pure combat.

◆ Memorize the locations of inventory stations and/or supply caches.

◆ Don't stay in the open too long. Duck behind hills and buildings to avoid detection and attack.

◆ Look for players fighting each other. That's when they're weakest.

◆ Use shield packs indoors.

◆ If you're being chased, drop grenades as you run, especially indoors.

◆ Never, ever forget to jet while fighting!

Fig. 8-3. Memorize the locations of supply caches.

Hunters

Fig. 8-4. Cash in your flags at the nexus.

Hunters games resemble Deathmatches—with a twist. You collect flags from fallen enemies and cash them in for points at a spot called the nexus. Try these suggestions for surviving your first Hunters games:

◆ Read the Deathmatch tips. Hunters is a lot like a Deathmatch.

◆ Find out where the nexus is.

◆ Don't stand right next to the nexus for long, or you'll get killed.

◆ You get more points the more flags you cash in at once; but the more flags you hold, the bigger target you are. Until you feel confident, cash in only a few at a time. Later you can work your way up.

◆ Seek out the best players and kill them— they're likely to have the most flags.

◆ Be aware of the "hoard" and "greed" options. If the hoard setting is enabled, you can't cash in flags from between five and two minutes left in the game. If greed mode is on, you can only cash in flags in amounts of eight or more.

◆ Avoid crowds; they're dangerous.
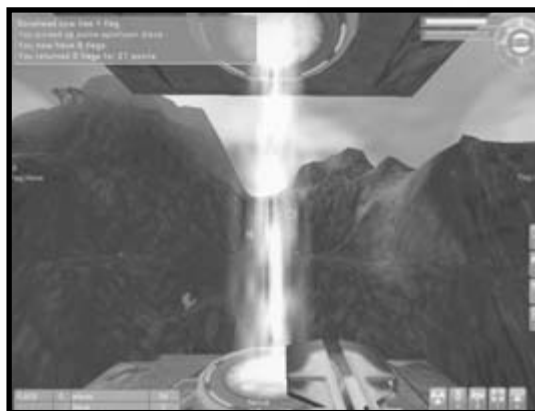
Fig. 8-5. Save up flags, then cash them in for a big score.

Team Hunters
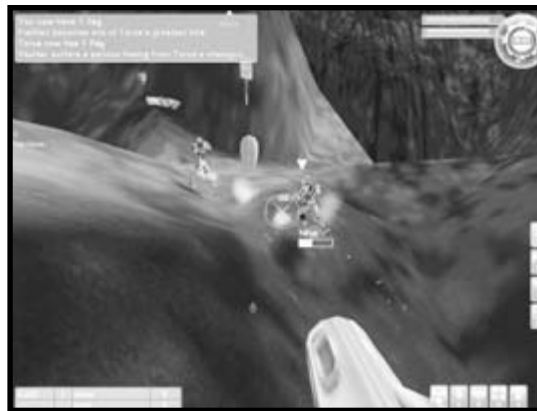
Fig. 8-6. Hunt in packs.

Team Hunters is very much like Hunters, save that players are in two teams rather than a free-for-all environment. Read the Deathmatch and Hunters tips first, then read the following:

◆ Stick with your teammates whenever possible. There's strength in numbers.

- When you get a flag, drop it in front of one of the best players on your team. That player will protect the flags and cash them in for a big bonus.

- Run from enemy groups if you're alone. It's tough to fight against superior numbers.

- Communicate with your teammates so you can pool your flags and take them in for the big score.

Fig. 8-7. Drop flags so your best teammates can grab them.

Bounty

Fig. 8-8. Bounty games force you to stalk one target at a time.

Bounty games are like a limited Deathmatch. You target one particular player at a time. When you've taken out your target, you get a new one. Penalties exist for killing bystanders (players who aren't your current target, and who aren't trying to attack you). These tips will get you started in Bounty:

- Stick to high ground so you can see your targets.

- Stay away from crowds. Pursuers can approach unseen if you're in a crowd.

- When attacked, put all your energy into fighting back. Don't look for your target while someone's shooting at you.

- Avoid weapons such as the fusion mortar and satchel charge, unless you're quite sure you won't kill any bystanders.

- Seek healing items rather than using kamikaze tactics. You get a bonus for killing three targets in a row without being killed yourself.

Fig. 8-9. Avoid crowds; they're deadly.

Capture & Hold

Capture & Hold games feature several towers with control switches; the winning team controls more of these towers longer. This game requires strategy; just fighting whoever gets close isn't a good way to win.

A few tips:

◆ If you have more players than there are towers on the map, dig in and defend a tower full-time.

◆ With only about half as many players on your team as towers (say, three players a side on a seven-tower map), you should stay on the move.

Fig. 8-11. Fortify towers with a network of turrets.

Fig. 8-10. Grab control switches to take control of a tower.

◆ Fortify towers with turrets and mines.

◆ In games with very few players, cloaking packs and sensor jammer packs help you sneak by defenses.

◆ Hold the towers that have turrets or inventory stations, rather than those that don't.

◆ Fight first, then capture. Don't make the mistake of going for the tower capture while you're being shot at—it's a surefire way to get killed.

Capture the Flag

Fig. 8-12. Capture the Flag is a complex game. Give it time.

It takes the longest to gain proficiency in the intricate Capture the Flag game. Don't get frustrated; instead, limit your role so you can be a productive member of your team, even if you're having trouble with combat.

A few suggestions:

◆ Stick with Scout or Assault armor until you're skilled and know the map. Juggernaut armor leaves inexperienced players slow and helpless.

◆ Start out playing defense, which is always easier than offense.

◆ Lay down turrets and sensors around the place you're defending. Then fight near them, so they can help you out.

◆ Figure out where the vital parts of your base are and what areas are most often attacked. Those are the places you're needed most.

◆ Repair damaged base items.

◆ If your teammates are attacking the enemy base with large vehicles, jump onboard. You can participate in the offense much better surrounded by teammates.

◆ Stay on high ground, like the top floor or roof of your base. You will see attackers before they arrive and can deal with them appropriately.

◆ When vehicles harass your base, take them down easily with a missile launcher.

Fig. 8-13. Repair damaged base equipment.

Siege
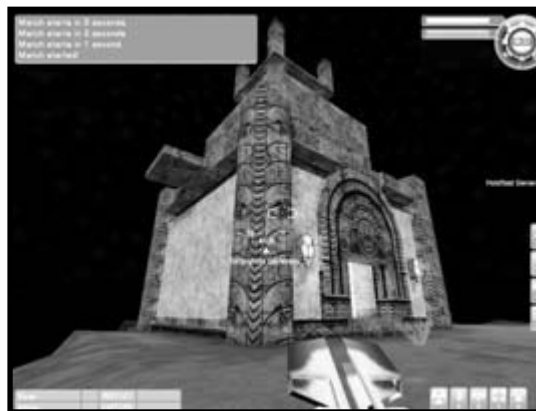
Fig. 8-14. Knowing where the base entrances are is crucial in Siege.

Siege is a game of offense and defense. First one team attacks a base while the other defends. When the control switch is captured, this phase ends. Then the roles are reversed, with the attackers defending and vice versa. In the end, whichever team captured the control switch in the least amount of time wins.

To succeed in Siege:

◆ Play a solo game and learn the map. This game type depends most on map knowledge.

◆ Most Siege maps require you to take down force field generators before capturing the control switch. Remember this, and don't just go for the flag.

◆ When on defense, protect the force field generators first.

◆ If the force field generators fall, when you're defending, either repair them or fall back to defend the control switch itself.

◆ Deploy turrets and sensors when on defense.

◆ Guard the entrances to the base, rather than the interiors. Keep the enemy outside.

◆ Attack in groups. Sneaking into the base usually doesn't work in Siege.
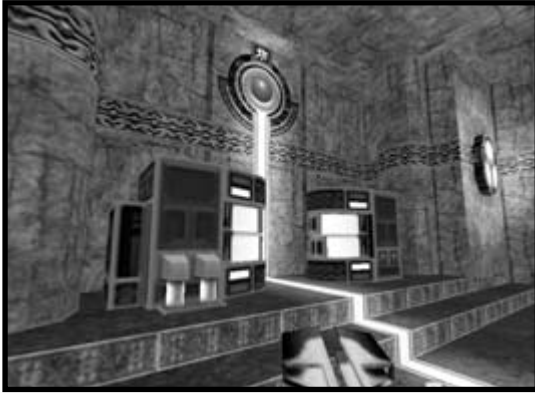
Fig. 8-15. Force field generators are usually the first target in Siege games.

Rabbit

Rabbit is a simple game with a single flag. Players try to grab the flag and run from the others. At the end, whoever held the flag longest wins. Here are tips for succeeding in Rabbit:

◆ Use Scout armor and an energy pack for maximum mobility.

◆ When a crowd has converged on a dropped flag, don't be the first to grab it. Let the others try, shoot them and then take the flag.

◆ Drop whiteout grenades as you run with the flag. They really distract your pursuers.

◆ Get behind hills and ridges as much as possible; they'll shield you from attacks.

◆ Hiding rarely works; stay on the move. If you're the Rabbit, you'll be waypointed for other players whenever you take damage or every 15 seconds if you don't take damage.

◆ Try to anticipate where the flag bearer is running so you can cut him or her off, instead of constantly pursuing.

◆ Work on your skiing and jump-jetting. This game tests those skills.

Fig. 8-17. Your ability to ski down slopes is essential in Rabbit.

Fig. 8-16. Never stop running when you have the flag.

9

Tactics for Non-Team Games

TRIBES 2 is geared toward team games, but it includes several non-team games, as well. This chapter discusses the non-team games, suggesting useful tactics and explaining aspects you might not have considered. Read on to learn how to improve.

DEATHMATCH

Deathmatch is the game type you're probably most familiar with. It's a kill-or-be-killed free-for-all—no teams and no real objectives, so it's a lot less complicated than other TRIBES 2 events.

These games contain no turrets or bases, so don't worry about eluding mechanical defenses, and don't bother with sensor jammer packs.

The best way to get better at Deathmatch games is to practice and to read the combat advice in earlier chapters of this guide. More than most, this game type is about pure fighting—so if you can fight, you can win.

Beyond that, the following suggestions will focus your game.

Figure 9-1. Deathmatch is a game of pure combat.

Understanding the Rules

The main difference between TRIBES 2 Deathmatches and those in other games is that in Deathmatch you're penalized for getting killed. Most other Deathmatch-style games penalize you for suicides (e.g., killing yourself with your own weapons or falling off a cliff), but they don't penalize you for getting shot by other players. TRIBES 2 is different.

Figure 9-02. Getting killed incurs serious penalties.

The upshot is simply that recklessness doesn't pay quite as much as in other Deathmatch-style games. In many other games, you ALWAYS head for the densest mass of players and fire the biggest, most explosive weapons, in hopes of getting fast kills. Surviving the charge isn't important if you manage to get a few kills first.

In TRIBES 2, however, getting killed matters. You still go where the other players are, and you should still fight more than you hide, but there's an added incentive to stay alive. Instead of making suicide runs, think more in terms of doing damage, and escaping. Instead of charging right into the midst of a pack of enemies, stay at the fringes and pick them off. When you're severely injured, don't just charge in for a final blaze of glory (unless you're sure you can squeeze out at least two more kills). Instead, regroup and locate healing items.

Figure 9-3. Avoid big groups to stay alive!

Inventory Stations

Figure 9-4. Some maps have inventory stations.

The first question in a Deathmatch is whether there are inventory stations. Most Deathmatches have them, but some don't. If a map doesn't have inventory stations, it tells you on the loading screen.

If the map has inventory stations, note where they are. They provide armor, weapons, and (sometimes overlooked) healing. They're also centers of activity, providing opportunities for quick kills—but they are also dangerous if you're poorly equipped.

Figure 9-5. Maps without inventory stations have small equipment caches.

Visit inventory stations quickly if your strategy calls for specific weapons or armor types. Otherwise, view them as a congregating place—sort of a watering hole, where you can catch unwary prey as it hurries about its business.

If your map does not have inventory stations, the make-up of the game changes radically, including these ramifications:

◆ You're stuck with the armor type you started with, and so is everyone else. This simplifies your strategy and lets you know what sort of enemies you're facing.

◆ Weapons and ammo are in short supply, meaning you should be more careful with your shots.

◆ You're less likely to face weapons that specifically counter what you're doing—for example, you usually can jump-jet all you want, because you won't face missile launchers.

◆ Gathering gear from the fallen is quite useful, whereas in maps with inventory stations you don't need to.

◆ Specific spots with gear caches are valuable, and you should memorize their locations.

That last point bears repeating. Most maps without inventory stations feature small caches of weapons and gear scattered about. Mostly there are caches of one weapon and associated ammo, a bunch of packs, or a bunch of healing items. Large groups of packs are located near the map's center.

Figure 9-6. On a map with no inventory stations, gathering weapons from fallen enemies is important.

TIP

Equipment caches are on towers, in bunkers, or on floating platforms. Occasionally they're on flat spaces of ground.

It's vital to find caches with weapons and packs appropriate to the map, then return there again and again. For example, if the map features a big indoor area and you plan to spend lots of time there, a shield pack or plasma rifle is an excellent find. Note where this gear is, so you can return quickly to stock up.
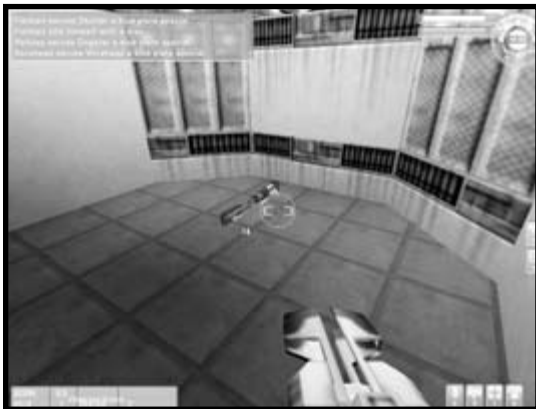
Figure 9-7. Equipment caches sit in buildings or on platforms.

Indoors or Outdoors

Figure 9-8. Indoor areas require different equipment and tactics.

Every map has an outdoor area, but not all maps have an indoor area. Indoor areas require different strategies than outdoor areas, so determine what you're dealing with and adjust your load-out.

If the map features no real indoor areas—say, just a few small, thin towers or simple bunkers—then you'll be fighting outdoors. Outdoor combat requires lots of mobility, so

Scout armor is a good choice. Juggernaut armor is tough to use effectively, because it's slow and you can't jump very high, thus becoming an easy target. The plasma rifle and shocklance are of limited value outdoors, but the laser rifle and missile launcher are extremely deadly. The spin-fusor is especially good outdoors.

Figure 9-9. Spinfusors are the most common outdoor weapon.

If there's a medium or large indoor area—typically a massive, castle-like base or an underground fortress—consider whether to gear yourself for indoor or outdoor fighting.

To fight outdoors, stick with the lighter armor types and the weapons that work best outdoors. Inside, however, go for a heavier, more durable armor and weapon set. Juggernaut armor becomes more feasible indoors, as do heavy-hitting weapons like the grenade launcher and plasma rifle. Shield packs are great, because you won't be jumping around that much indoors. Put your energy into a life-saving shield.

There's no problem with fighting inside and outside, but gearing yourself for either an indoor or outdoor environment, then staying there improves your score, especially if you're a novice.

Figure 9-10. Shield packs prove particularly valuable indoors.

Gear for Range

Another consideration when selecting Deathmatch gear is the range at which you're fighting. For up close battle, it's hard to beat a plasma rifle. In long-range duels, the laser rifle is unmatched.
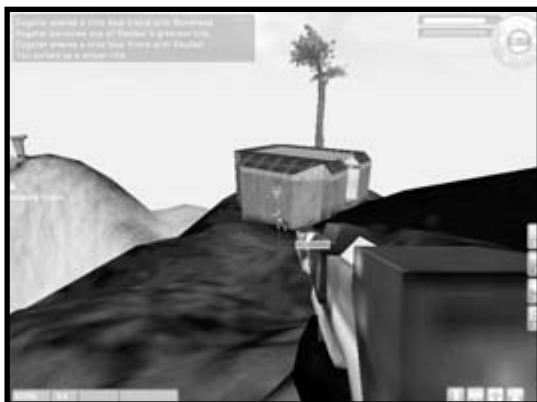
Figure 9-11. Outside, the laser rifle is the ticket.

The map determines the range. If it features big indoor areas, you're likely to fight at close range. Also, if it's extremely mountainous, you won't see your enemies until you crest a hill and spot them nearby—so again, you're looking at

short-range fights. And finally, if the visibility is poor, short-range combat is necessary. You can't see far enough to fight at long range if the map is dark or foggy, so equip yourself for short-range encounters.

Figure 9-12. Foggy or dark maps make the laser rifle practically useless.

Realize that the armor and pack you take affect your ability to dictate fighting range. In Scout armor with an energy pack, you can fight at whatever range you want. If the enemy approaches, retreat. If the enemy retreats, pursue and close the gap. It's all up to you.

On the other hand, you can't dictate range in Juggernaut armor. Most of your enemies are faster than you, so if they want to fight at short or long range, they will. In this case, carry the weapons necessary to fight at any range. You can also control fight range arti-ficially—say, by going inside, thus forcing short-range combat.

Fringe of the Action

The best place to be in a Deathmatch is the fringe of the action. You can't always be in this coveted and elusive spot, but seek it out.

Figure 9-13. Fighting distracted enemies is always best.

An ideal "fringe" spot is on a hill overlooking a multiparty fight below. This choice situation allows you to take shots at distracted enemies, with no return fire to worry about. These enemies are fighting at close range, so you can lob grenades or fusion mortar shells into their midst and kill more than one at once. Also, you have a good angle for shooting spinfusor discs or other explosives.

Often you find yourself at the fringe of a fight just through chance. But you can improve your odds of getting into this great situation. Here are a few suggestions:

◆ Hang around in sheltered areas, then pop out onto high ground and look around for a fight nearby.

◆ Enter buildings by the highest possible entrance, then slowly work your way down. Often you'll stumble across a fight below you.

◆ Lurk near inventory stations. Fights sometimes break out as players seek equipment.

◆ Listen and watch for gunfire, then approach it at full speed. If you're lucky you'll get there before the fight is over.
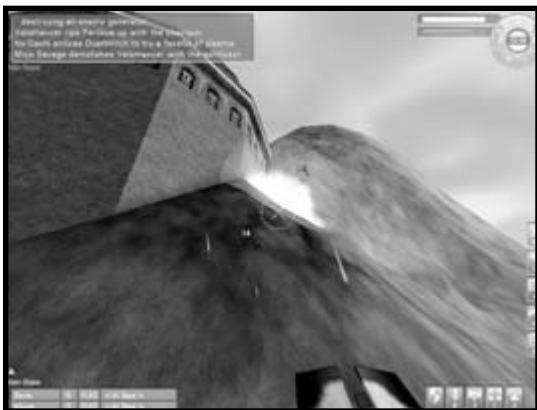
Figure 9-14. Hide behind corners and ridges, then pop out to surprise the enemy.

Specialized Attacks: Sniping and Bombing

In Deathmatch games killing isn't just one of your goals, it's the only goal. Unlike in Bounty, you don't have to be particular about whom you kill, or when. And unlike in Hunters, you don't need to worry about picking things up or taking them anywhere. It's just about killing, pure and simple.

Because of this, you can plan specialized attacks and techniques that wouldn't work elsewhere. For example, use the laser rifle extensively in Deathmatches. You don't need to collect flags (as in Hunters), so you don't need to be close to your prey. And since everyone is a viable target (unlike in Bounty or a team game), you have lots to choose from.

Another effective technique is to hole up in a confined area with Juggernaut armor and some high-explosive weapons (like the grenade launcher or fusion mortar). You can punish enemies in lighter armor, heedless of the damage you're

taking—because they probably can't absorb as much as you can.

Be creative! No other game type offers as much latitude for free-form mayhem.

Figure 9-15. Practice any and all tactics in a Deathmatch.

Detection is Still Important

Even though you aren't dealing with an organized enemy team, and you don't really have to worry about sensors, stealth is still important. It's

Figure 9-16. You don't have to worry about sensors in Deathmatches. But you still need to worry about being seen!

always better to see the enemy before you're seen; often this is the difference between getting a kill and being killed.

Hang around near ridges, but frequently pop from one side to the other. This gives you the benefit of sticking to the high ground, yet keeps enemies from seeing you for too long, and allows you to surprise enemies on the other side of the ridge.

Also, get in the habit of hugging buildings and quickly popping out to see who's around the corner. The element of surprise is priceless, especially if you capitalize with a quick, accurate shot from a powerful weapon.

Inventory as a Weapon

Inventory stations have importance beyond what they can give you. They're also gathering points, either rich with targets or fraught with peril, depending on how you look at it.

Figure 9-17. A crowd at the inventory station can lead to opportunities....

Be aware of the drawing power of inventory stations and weapons caches. Don't stand right next to them, because that's where all eyes are focused. Stand nearby, sheltered from at least one direction by a ridge or building, and pick off enemies who approach to get gear. Stick to high ground, so you can swoop down. And attack before the enemy reaches the inventory station. This maximizes the likelihood that your foe is injured or without good weapons, and disrupts the attempt to reach the station.

Another technique is to stock up on potent weapons or armor, then get as far away from inventory stations as possible. The farther away you are from the gear, the less likely it is that the enemies you face have already grabbed it. Thus, you'll be at an advantage when you fight.

Hunters

Figure 9-18. Hunters games are Deathmatches with a twist.

Hunters is much like Deathmatch, but with an added element: You don't automatically get credit for kills. Instead, you collect the flags fallen enemies cough up and bring them to a central spot called the nexus. Only there can you redeem the flags for points. The more flags you redeem at once, the higher the point multiplier—so stocking up on flags, then cashing them all in at once is preferable to cashing them in one by one.

Of course, the more flags you hold, the more

risk you run. There's nothing more heartbreaking than getting killed with a big hoard of flags just before you cash them in.

Figure 9-19. The nexus glows.

Ultimately, though, cashing in multiple flags at once is your ticket to victory. You have to be good enough to hold multiple flags at once, cash them in, and get that big multiplier. If you don't run those risks, you probably won't win.

Greed

Hunters games have a couple of variables. One is the "greed" parameter. If this is enabled, players need to bring eight or more flags to the nexus—fewer won't work.

With this restriction, you have to concentrate even more on survival. You can't get a flag and run it right over to the nexus. You have to stock up, and that means staying alive for a while. Avoid big clusters of enemies even more carefully than usual, because it's in a crowd that you're most vulnerable.
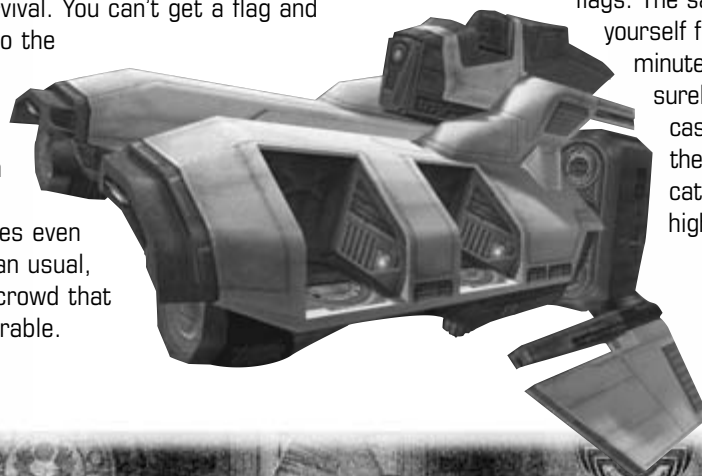
Hoard

Figure 9-20. With hoard on, you face a three-minute period near the end of the game when you can't redeem flags.

The other parameter is "hoard" mode. If this is active, no flags may be cashed in when the game has between five and two minutes left. That three-minute span can make a big difference in play, so never forget when it's enabled.

If you have lots of flags when there are about five minutes left, cash in before the five-minute mark. The other option is to become more conservative in those three minutes, avoiding enemies.

If you have no flags as the five-minute mark approaches, lurk around the nexus. You can ambush other players looking to cash in their flags. The same is true if you find yourself flagless at the two-minute mark: There are surely players who want to cash in flags right after the hoard period, and catching them can be highly profitable.

To Collect or Not to Collect
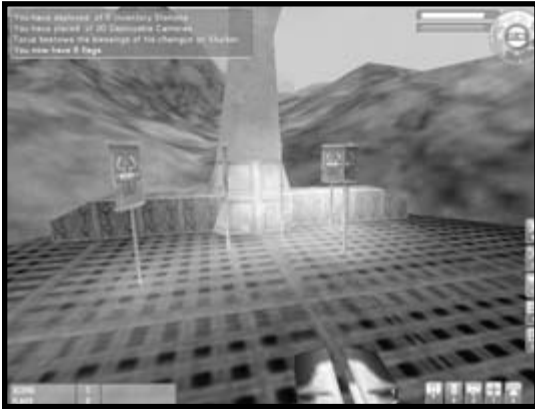
Figure 9-21. How many flags must you collect before cashing in? It depends on how the game is progressing.

The biggest question during a Hunters game is likely to be, At what point should I cash in my flags? Unfortunately, there's no easy answer. The individual game you're playing dictates the answer.

For example, if everyone's cashing in one or two flags at a time, do the same. If a few players are stocking up, then cashing in, you MUST do the same or run the risk of falling behind.

If you're near the end of the game and in the lead, make several small trips to the nexus. This lets you incrementally build your lead, and you don't have to worry about getting shot and coughing up all your flags to a competitor, who might then cash them in and overtake you.

Conversely, if time's getting short and you AREN'T in the lead, build up a big stash and cash it in for a last-second victory.

In an evenly matched game (in terms of player skill levels), cash in more frequently, because you never know when someone else is going to pick you off. On the other hand, if there are several weak players and only a couple of strong ones,

and you're one of the strong ones, stock up and try for the big payday. The other strong players will undoubtedly do the same, so keep up.

Consider Kill Distance
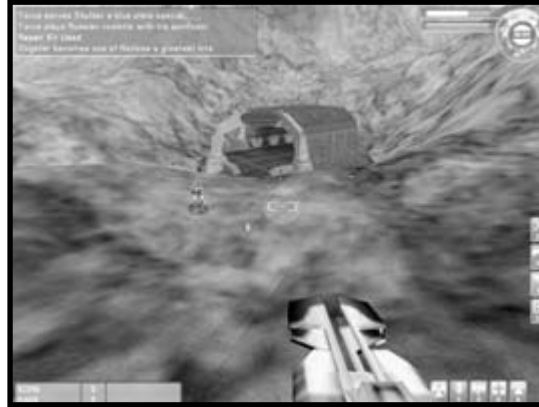
Figure 9-22. When you kill your target from afar, someone else may grab the flag.

In Deathmatch games you can kill at any range and get credit for it. In Hunters games, you need to grab flags from the fallen enemy—so it often doesn't pay to kill from long distance. Someone else may run in and grab the flags you just worked so hard for!

So do most of your fighting at close range. The usual jump-jet-and-spinfusor dance works well. Sniping is out of the question, however.

Also, fighting in a crowd is even less desirable than usual in Hunters games, because it's too easy for enemies to collect flags you've worked hard to get.

Attack the Collectors

Figure 9-23. When an enemy is trying to pick up a flag, you can anticipate just where to aim.

If you see an enemy make a kill, but the flag hasn't been collected yet, go after that player immediately. Players are naturally anxious to collect flags from their kills—after all, that's what they just worked so hard to get. In fact, players often run for a flag even if they know you're attacking them—because they're afraid you'll get there first. Knowing where they're going lets you anticipate where they'll be, so you can aim better.

On the flip side, if you're going for a flag and someone starts shooting at you, turn around and fight. Fighting is always the first order of business; if you run to the flag and ignore the enemy, you're just asking for a pounding. Kill the newcomer, then collect the flags at your leisure.

Lighter Armor vs. Heavier Armor

Beginners should use Scout armor in Hunters games. The problem with heavier armor is the need to do more than just kill. In Deathmatch, all you have to do is kill enemies to get your credit. In Hunters you have the added problem of collecting flags and getting them somewhere.

Figure 9-24. Lighter armor types make Hunters games easier.

In Deathmatch it's perfectly acceptable to hole up in a confined area, Juggernaut armor on, far from the map's center. But in Hunters, you have to transport those flags to the nexus. In Juggernaut armor, this can be tough. Traveling long distances in the open is difficult, and jumping to a highly placed nexus is no picnic either.

Figure 9-25. It's a long trip to the nexus when you're wearing Juggernaut armor.

Also, after you score a kill and grab a flag, get away and heal up. Juggernaut armor is more durable than the other armor types, but it's hard to escape anyone when you're wearing it. Scout armor gives you the freedom to zoom in, grab a flag, and exit the area.

When you've got a little experience with Hunters, consider Assault armor. Then, after you're quite experienced, try Juggernaut armor.

Bounty

Bounty is a game of predator and prey. Every player is given a single target, and points are assigned for killing that target. At any given time, you have one target, and you may be hunted by one or more other players.

Figure 9-26. Bounty is a limited, paranoia-inducing Deathmatch.

Points are not scored for killing someone who's trying to kill you. However, they aren't subtracted either. Killing an innocent bystander is discouraged. If you kill someone on your list, then kill them again later, they're added back to your hit list, and you have to kill them again to get them back off your list. Be careful.

TIP

Bonuses accrue for killing three players in a row without getting killed yourself, and for killing all the targets on your list first.

Bounty games are a limited Deathmatch. They possess unique risks and characteristics.

Equipping Yourself

As with Hunters games, we recommend the lighter armor types for Bounty. You can't just kill indiscriminately; you have to GO places, so if your prey isn't in the vicinity, you must give chase—and that's hard to do when you're in Juggernaut armor and your prey is a scout.

Figure 9-27. Scout armor is recommended.

Sniping is difficult in Bounty games, so unless it's a very open map, don't use laser rifles. Your target's location dictates where to stand if you're sniping, and getting a hit on very mobile prey is difficult. Also, you can't stand in highly protected areas, so you're extremely vulnerable.

Our preferred technique for Bounty games is to use Scout armor, get close, and attack from above

(usually with a spinfusor) when the enemy is intent on taking out his or her own prey.

Avoiding Attackers

Figure 9-28. Kill your attacker or your prey? It is a difficult decision.

Getting attacked is very distracting. It's tough to strike a balance between evading pursuit and pursuing; too much of one and you'll never hunt your own targets, but too much of the other and you'll get shot down all the time.

When someone is attacking you, jet away and get the attacker to pursue. This tactic leads to good ambush situations, especially inside. If the enemy is an over-eager pursuer, set up a deadly ambush.

If you're in lighter armor than your pursuer and your target isn't nearby, flee. This frustrates your attacker and allows you a grace period to hunt your own prey.

If you're in heavier or similar armor, just slug it out. Finally, if you're being attacked but your prey is nearby, go for your prey. Sometimes this gets you killed, but you have to draw the line somewhere; if you always focus on your attacker rather than your prey, you won't get anywhere in Bounty.

Seeking the Enemy
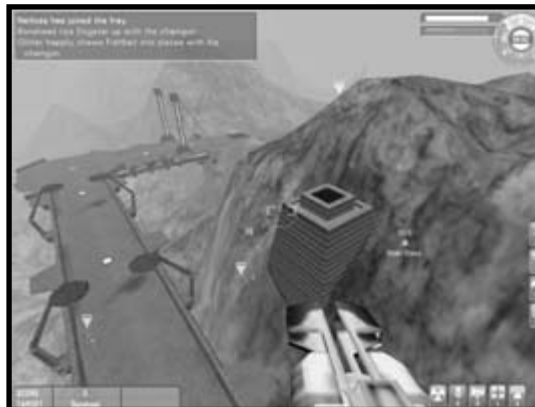
Figure 9-29. Stay away from crowds as you seek out your prey.

As you look for your enemy, avoid putting yourself in compromising positions. Stick to the high ground, and don't get in the midst of a crowd. Stay at the fringes.

You never know who's your enemy, so watch the players around you. Separate from anyone who gets too close. If pursuit continues, fire.

Watch the messages flashing by on your screen. If your prey just got killed by someone else, that person will need to resupply soon, so watch for players jetting in toward the map's main inventory stations or equipment caches. If your prey just killed someone else, consider whether you recognize the name of the player just killed. If you saw that player in a particular spot recently, then that's the place to look for your prey.

Only if you search fruitlessly for quite some time should you start investigating dangerous enclosed spaces and/or start moving into crowds.

Attacking the Enemy

You have the advantage of stealth until you start attacking your prey. Take time to get yourself in a good position overhead before attacking. Also, when you first attack, use a potent weapon like the spinfusor or shocklance. Don't open up with the chaingun; by the time you deal a little damage, you've lost the advantage of surprise.

Figure 9-30. The ELF projector grounds your target in a hurry.

The ELF projector is an effective way of initiating an attack, especially if you switch to another weapon after the initial volley. You won't deal much damage, but you will ground your prey, which is often just as good or better.

RABBIT

Rabbit is a fairly simple game with a single flag; everyone tries to get it. While a player holds the flag, points are scored. Everyone tries to kill the flag holder and take the flag for him- or herself, meanwhile evading all the other like-minded players. When time runs out, the player who's held the flag for the longest time, total, wins.

Figure 9-31. As the name suggests, Rabbit is all about running.

Rabbit doesn't require much in the way of tactics—though there are a few. Mainly it requires skill at your controls and the ability to navigate the terrain swiftly. If you can do that, and if you can take out a fleeing opponent quickly, then you can succeed at Rabbit.

Weapons and Armor Considerations

Figure 9-32. We recommend—you guessed it—Scout armor.

If you're quite good at the game and want to be a rebel, disregard the following weapons and armor tips. But for most players, these rules are golden.

First, Scout armor with an energy pack is the standard load-out. Because this is a game of pursuit, you need to be fast above all else—and this is the fastest possible configuration.

You might entertain thoughts of choosing a heavier armor type instead. "I know," you muse, "I'll wade in there with Juggernaut armor and a shield pack. With everyone else in Scout armor, they won't stand a chance!" Throw this idea out, at least until your skills are unmatched. First, you'll be too slow to ever reach the flag; you'll spend the whole game lagging behind the pack, wishing you could get there a little faster. Second, if you somehow DO manage to get the flag, there's likely to be a whole pack of enemies trying to shred you. Your heavy armor might be useful in one-on-one combat, but it won't protect you against a whole horde of attackers. However, if you can run to an inventory station—especially one inside or in a bunker—and swap into a Juggernaut with a shield pack, you'd be surprised at how long you can hold out against a horde of Scouts.

After you've selected your armor and pack, you need weapons. The spinfusor is the default

Figure 9-33. As soon as you get that flag, hit the jets.

weapon, because its good blast radius helps when fighting speedy foes. The ELF projector sucks energy and grounds a foe, though this is risky if there are others in the area; they can easily capitalize and steal the flag first.

The chaingun is good for flying near the "rabbit" and picking him or her out of the air.

Other weapons are less useful. Long-range threats like the laser rifle score hits, but if you shoot the rabbit from a distance, someone else is

Figure 9-34. Rough terrain protects you when you have the flag.

likely to take the flag.

Terrain Considerations

If the map is hilly, stick to the rough ground as much as possible. Jet above upward slopes and ski on downward slopes. Always try to put ridges between the enemy and you. Don't waste precious jet energy when you're hidden. Instead, save it up for when the enemy appears and starts shooting—that's when you need to get airborne.

If there's a large indoor area, run through it. Hiding can be tricky, though in some cases it works. Don't depend on it, though; running should always be your first priority.

10
Team Game Tactics

Team games lie at the heart of TRIBES 2. These are the games you're likely to spend most of your time playing, and the ones that require the most strategy. Whereas solo games allow the freedom to choose your own strategy, team games force you to adapt to your teammates. Ultimately, this can provide a more rewarding experience than single-player games—but only if you accept that you can't do everything by yourself.

This chapter discusses the various team games, highlighting important strategies and explaining what you should be thinking about as the game progresses.
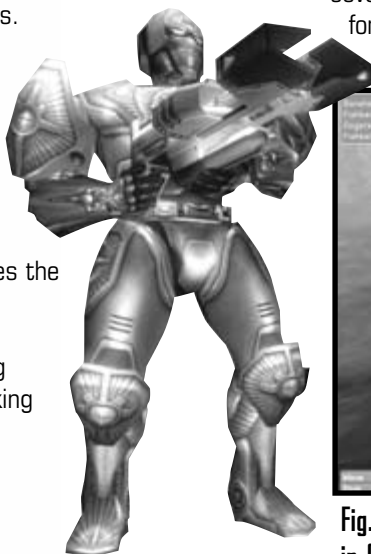
Capture & Hold

Capture & Hold games feature a number of controllable towers—usually between three and seven, though there are exceptions. Teams battle for command of these towers, gaining points every few seconds for the towers in their

Fig. 10-1. Capturing towers is the name of the game in Capture & Hold.

control. Ultimately, the battle is won by the team that's controlled the most towers for the longest amount of time.

Capture & Hold games are fun because they contain some of the attack and defense elements of Capture the Flag, but they're more open. Teams get scattered, and it's hard to defend any particular spot perfectly—there's more dashing around and skirmishing for control of various areas.

Fig. 10-2. Touching control switches transfers control of a tower and all of its assets.

Here are some suggestions for improving your Capture & Hold game performance.

Match Strategy to Team Size and Control Points
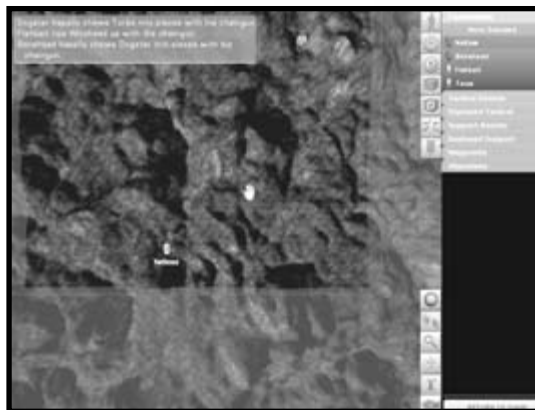
Fig. 10-3. The number of players on your team determines your strategy.

Your strategy in Capture & Hold depends on how many towers are on the map and how many teammates you have. Both factors are equally important. As the game begins, look at both and figure out how you're going to play—keep track of players who join the game, so you can alter your strategy if more people show up.

There's no magic calculation, but the basic rule is: If you have fewer players than towers, you must spend the game on the run. If you have more players than towers, you should fortify.

Let's say you have two players on your side, and there are five towers on the map. Your team needs to split up and constantly stay on the move, capturing one tower, fortifying it slightly with mines and turrets, then immediately moving on. If you both hold towers, you'll have only two throughout the game, and the enemy will hold the other three. Keep moving, or you'll lose.

Fig. 10-4. Fortify towers with turrets before moving on.

On the other hand, let's say you're playing that same five-tower map, and now you have seven players. In this case, dig in and fortify. A good strategy is for three pairs of two players to hold towers. This gives you good defenses at three of the five towers, and therefore a good chance of holding all three and winning. The seventh player, who should be one of your better fighters, can be a lone harasser who searches for poorly defended enemy bases and tries to capture or disrupt them. He or she may not capture enemy towers for very long, but he or she will distract the enemies and prevent them from throwing everyone on offense.

Things get a little muddy in the middle ground. For example, if you have three players on that five-tower map, you can theoretically have one player defend a tower apiece, but this results in everyone being on defense, which is a tough position. In this case, have two of the three players hold onto towers while the third acts as a rover, taking enemy towers, fortifying them, then moving on to the next. This strategy ensures that two towers are always well defended, and allows you to play offensively as well. Assign the rover role to your best player, who should be able to take various towers frequently enough to score the victory.

Attacking Towers

Fig. 10-5. An enemy-held tower can be tough to capture.

Bear in mind that the "speed" approach isn't that useful in Capture & Hold. In Capture the Flag games, a swift commando-style raid can take out a crucial generator, destroy several inventory stations, or steal the flag. In a Capture & Hold game, however, you aren't looking to just get in and get out. You need to hold onto the tower instead. Therefore, just running in and capturing the control switch won't work. The defenders will simply capture it back, and now you're back where you started.

The one exception is when a tower controls turrets. If you can swoop in, take the control switch, and turn the tower's turrets on the defenders, it's a sweet trick indeed.

The section on Capture the Flag games, below, details various methods for attacking an enemy position.

Holding the Fort

Fig. 10-6. Spider-clamp turrets and mines give attackers an unwelcome surprise.

To hold a tower, first establish defenses. Place spider-clamp turrets in a position where they can either defend the flag or the most logical entrance. Drop a circle of landspike turrets around the tower, then drop a deployable motion sensor or two. Place some mines on the control switch for good measure.

> ### TIP
> **You can also drop mines at the base entrance if there aren't any teammates in the area.**

Now you're ready to hold the fort! If you've got an inventory station, get into Assault or Juggernaut armor, and consider a shield pack. You don't need to get anywhere quickly, so speed isn't crucial.

Next, position yourself; standing atop the tower is always a favorite strategy, because it lets you see who's coming and attack them before they arrive. If you're wearing Juggernaut armor, harass the attackers with fusion mortar fire.

On relatively flat maps with excellent view range, use Scout armor and a laser rifle, then stand atop the base and snipe at attackers. This is particularly effective if you aren't the only defender at the base.

Fig. 10-7. On certain map types, the laser rifle can help you defend towers.

With all your defenses in place, you're tough to evict. Skillful attackers may be able to evade your counterattacks, but every turret and mine gives them something new to think about and distracts them from attacking you.

Deploying and Running

If your strategy requires constant movement, get in the habit of quickly establishing defenses in the towers you capture so they won't be completely defenseless after you leave. Of course, turrets and mines can't hold a tower for long with no defenders to assist them. But they can slow down the enemy. Systematically laying down defenses at your towers is often the difference between success and failure.

Fig. 10-8. Establish defenses at your towers before leaving them.

Place several spider-clamp turrets near the base entrances, and throw a few landspike turrets around the perimeter. Place them on hillsides facing the tower, so that enemies approaching from the other side of the hill won't see them right away.

Throw down a pair of motion sensors to assist in your defense against cloaked enemies.

Fig. 10-9. Motion sensors prevent cloaked enemies from sneaking in to capture towers.

After all these turrets are in place, mine the heck out of the tower. Since you're abandoning it, mine the entrances, the control switch, and everything in between. Place mines on rooftops or high ledges that attackers can easily enter through.

When the tower is thoroughly filled with turrets and mines, it's time to leave.

Beacons, Inventory Stations, and Snipers
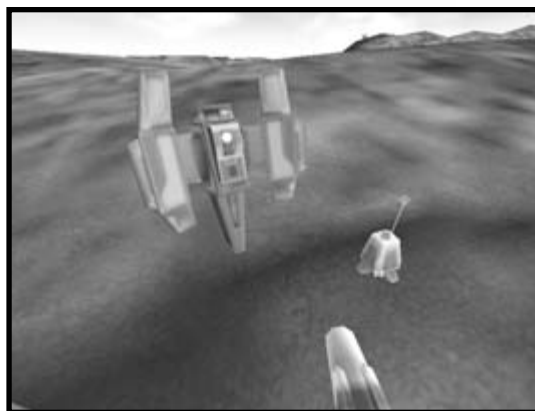
Fig. 10-10. Drop beacons on remote inventory stations so your whole team can see them.

Drop deployable inventory stations in various hard-to-see spots, then place beacons on them, which allow your team to see where they are and use them to the fullest capacity. This is particularly important on maps with few inventory stations.

Beacons can also mark tower turrets, so your team can destroy them from afar when attacking particularly tough towers.

On larger maps with good visibility, have one or two snipers working full time to keep the enemy off balance—but only if you have lots of players. On small teams, you need everyone directly capturing and holding towers.

Capture the Flag

Capture the Flag is the most complex, intense, and involved game in TRIBES 2. It requires you to simultaneously attack and defend, effectively fortify bases, and mount potent (and sometime multiphase) offenses. These games often stay at a stalemate for a long time, only to break open suddenly when one of the teams' defenses fails.

Fig. 10-11. Capture the Flag games are complex and rewarding.

Capture the Flag games are therefore the hardest to prepare you for. You're probably going to run into problems at some point. We can, however, point out what is most likely to frustrate and confuse you, and suggest solutions. After that, it's up to you to practice and gain experience. Remember that CTF is a game with a steep learning curve; you'll still be learning new tricks and techniques the hundredth time you play it.

Understand the Map

Fig. 10-12. Get familiar with the map BEFORE playing a real game.

You can get away with not knowing the map in some games. Capture & Hold maps, for example, tend to be very simple: a large open area and several small towers with control switches. You can learn almost everything you need to know from a quick glance at the command circuit map.

This is not the case with Capture the Flag. These maps usually feature complex, multipart bases, important generators and inventory stations whose locations you must know, and large indoor areas that don't appear on the command circuit map. The only way to learn these maps is through experience.

The very best way to learn a map is also the most boring. Host a game but don't ask anyone to join in. Then run around and look at everything. Look for good hiding spots, alternate entrances to towers and bases, and key equipment such as vehicle stations and generators. Run through the indoor areas and figure out how all the hallways and entrances connect. Determine if you need to do anything special before you get the flag (like destroy force field generators), or whether you can just jet in and grab it.

If you lack the time or patience to do this, at least spend some time exploring your own team's base when you're playing an actual game. Understanding how your team's base is laid out tells you a great deal about the enemy base because the bases are usually virtually identical.

Fig. 10-13. Study your own base. The enemy base is likely to be almost identical.

Determine the Organization
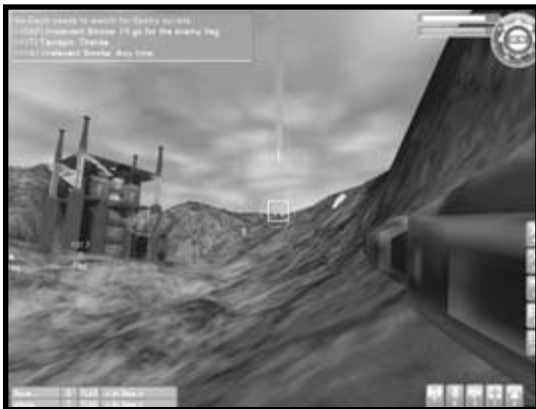
Fig. 10-14. Is your team organized? A few minutes of playing makes it clear.

Some teams run like highly efficient machines, with established leaders and followers who all know their roles. Many teams are ragged collections of individuals, some of whom won't listen to you or adjust their style of play to fit the team's needs. One of the first things to determine when you start playing a CTF map is what sort of team you've got.

On a well-organized team, there's usually a great deal of communication. Even if there isn't, players instinctively fall into roles. Some immediately start setting up defenses as the game starts, while others grab vehicles and fly off, or assemble into groups and move toward the enemy base. Poorly organized teams are usually obvious, because most of the team immediately goes on offense, with little care for manning the base or establishing defenses.

If you're on a well-organized team, listen to conversations and accept any orders you're given. Ask the team what you can do to help.

If you're on a poorly organized team, you can either issue orders and attempt to organize it, or simply look at what the rest of your team is doing and do the job that's being neglected. Often this means staying back on defense and/or setting out defenses. Usually a combination of approaches works; ask people to stay back and help you with the defense, and you'll usually get a few takers.

Establish a Perimeter
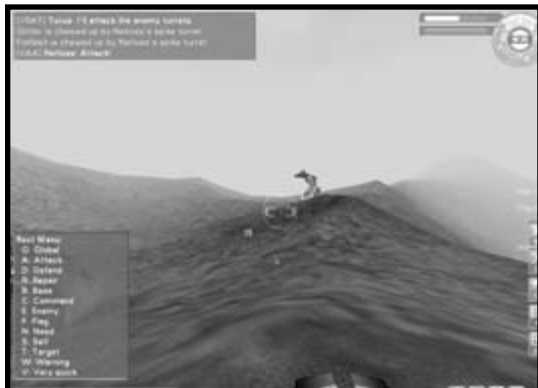
Fig. 10-15. Shouting out voice commands may or may not get your teammates to listen.

Fig. 10-16. Deploy pulse sensors if your sensor coverage is weak.

The very first order of business in most CTF missions is laying down defenses. This means spider-clamp turrets in the bases, landspike turrets around the bases, a few motion sensors outside and inside to help the turrets, and mines on the flag.

Dropping a few deployable inventory stations at various spots outside and inside speeds up the overall deployment process. Lay down deployable pulse sensors if you want to extend your general sensor coverage.

There are limits to how many turrets your team can have—often only 10 of each type. Generally, lay down the maximum allowable number of turrets and place new ones when the old ones get destroyed. Every turret enhances your base defenses, and you need all you can get.

Assign Defenders

All the turrets and mines in the world can't defend your base if there are no players on defense. Sure, those deployed defenses can take out novices or lone reckless players, but they're there mainly to assist your human defenders. The deployed defenses distract the enemy and force a reaction, making an easier target. If the attackers are busy destroying or evading the deployed defenses, the human defenders will have a much easier time taking them down.
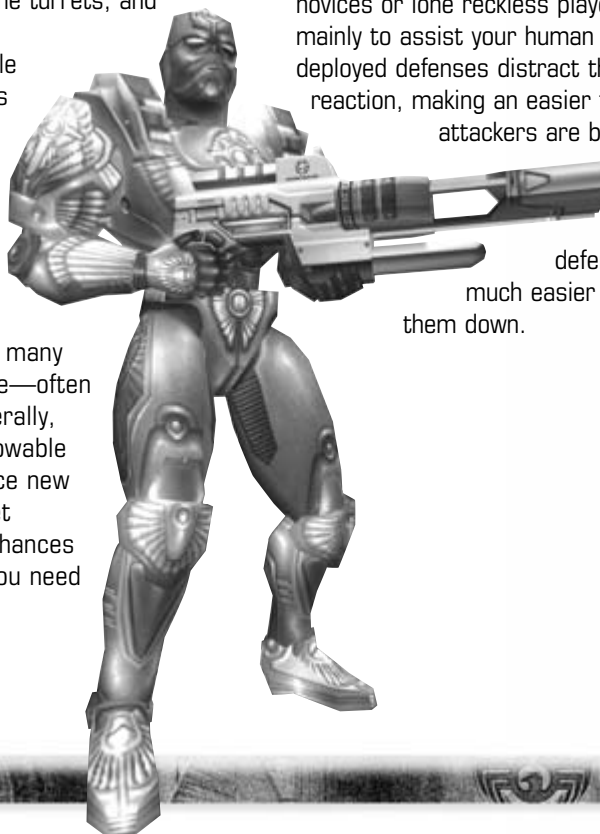
OUTDOOR DEFENDERS

Fig. 10-17. Lightly armored defenders can pursue enemies that grab the flag.

On most maps, the majority of your defenders should be outside. This provides several benefits.

First, defending the base from the outside lets you see attackers well ahead of time. Second, by defending from the outside you can work in conjunction with landspike turrets and base turrets. Third, if you don't defend the outside of your base, the enemy has a much easier time getting by your defenses. Without defenders, an attacker can set up camp on a nearby hill, zoom in, and blast away all of your landspike turrets. Alternately, he or she can easily approach an upper base entrance and quickly get inside. With human defenders, none of this is easy.

The exact sort of outdoor defenders you need depends on the map. On a map with great visibility, have a player with a laser rifle sniping at distant enemies. On a map featuring an exposed, outdoor flag, have Scout armored defenders with energy packs waiting near the flag; they can easily pursue enemy flag runners with that equipment load-out.

Most of your defenders should be general-purpose defenders, roaming around to meet whatever threat is currently facing the base. General-purpose defenders should also lay down infrastructure during their free time and repair damaged base objects whenever possible.

SPOT DEFENDERS

Fig. 10-18. Heavily armored defenders are great indoors, or at guarding the flag itself.

Another approach to defense is to remain in one spot, more or less, throughout much of the game. We call this "spot defense."

Spot defense isn't as useful as general outdoor defense. In a small game with only a few people per side, you can't afford to have a player sit somewhere indefinitely; everyone should be moving around and covering wide areas. But in a large game with lots of players, spot defenders can be invaluable.

For example, if your flag is in a heavily guarded base with only two main entrances, you can have a spot defender at each entrance. It's simple and effective, and it makes it hard for anyone to get inside.

Another scenario: your flag is outdoors, and it's vulnerable for anyone to swoop in and grab. A player in Juggernaut armor can be assigned to defend the flag itself. One technique is to have the Juggernaut stand near the flag, ready to turn on a shield pack in case of attack. The defender can duke it out with distant attackers with his fusion mortar or switch to the ELF projector to bring speedy would-be flag grabbers to a screeching halt.

Fig. 10-19. The ELF projector pulls lightly armored flag raiders back to the ground.

Optionally, the flag defender can be perched on a hilltop somewhere near the flag, watching for incoming flag raiders. He or she can then lob fusion mortar shells down onto the flag itself, timed to coincide with arrival of the raiders. There are many variants.

If you plan to defend a particular spot for quite a while, dig in and make it comfortable. Drop a deployable inventory station nearby so you don't have to leave for supplies; place turrets or mines wherever they'll make your job easier. Also, drop a camera at the spot where enemies are most likely to appear, and check it periodically for activity. Give yourself every possible advantage over an attacker!

Assign Attackers

A number of your teammates should go on offense. These players are responsible for destroying or evading the enemy defenses and retrieving the enemy flag.

Fig. 10-20. A potent offense is as important as a solid defense.

Generally speaking, your team will run smoothest if your best players are on offense, because attacking is a much harder job than defending. On defense you have many things on your side: You're on familiar territory, you're surrounded by teammates, you have turrets and mines helping you, and you can retreat to inventory stations for quick ammo and healing. On offense, all that is reversed: You're in enemy territory, your opponents are all around you, the defenses are shooting at you, and the inventory stations won't work for you. There's so much more to consider and deal with on offense.

ATTACK PARTIES

Fig. 10-21. Attacking in groups is a recipe for success.

Some attackers should form pairs or larger groups. Having multiple attackers crash the gates simultaneously is vital when trying to take down a tough enemy base.

Have you ever seen an action movie where the hero faces a legion of thugs, but manages to defeat them all because they inexplicably attack one at a time? Your offense will look like those dimwitted thugs if you don't attack in groups. The defenders will pick you off at their leisure, and you'll never get anywhere. Attack as a group instead, and you'll be infinitely more effective.

You don't need to engage in any fancy teamwork to make group-attacking work. Just stick together until you're close to the enemy base. After you start fighting, it's nearly impossible to keep track of your teammates anyway. It's important to attack simultaneously, because it gives you a much better chance of overpowering the defense. It confuses defenders, making them decide whom to attack and whom to ignore, and it divides their firepower.

VEHICLE ATTACKERS

Fig. 10-22. Vehicles not only help you attack faster, they also keep your group together.

Vehicles are more valuable on certain maps than on others. The two main reasons to use vehicles are to get somewhere fast and to attack the enemy more effectively. (The Jericho forward base adds a third reason—establish an inventory station and a turret in enemy territory.)

Use vehicles to reach an enemy base on the other side of the map quickly. While players manning the vehicle's gun ports can attack enemies along the way, getting to the destination quickly is the main objective.

If you take a big vehicle loaded with teammates, you're maximizing your efficiency. You not only get everyone to the enemy base quickly, but you get them there ALL AT ONCE. Large vehicles force everyone to stay together until you reach the base, which makes group attacks automatic and painless. Use the large vehicles as much as possible.

Fig. 10-23. Big, fully manned vehicles can be extremely destructive.

The other reason to use vehicles is for their offensive capabilities. Players driving vehicles can be effective attackers and base defenders, providing they're skillful pilots and they're using the right vehicles. For example, the Beowulf tank is a great offensive weapon. In a large game with lots of players, skillful use of large combat vehicles means the difference between success and failure.

LONE RAIDERS (SPEED AND STEALTH ATTACKERS)

There are times when attacking in groups isn't feasible. In a small game with only a few players, for example, you'll probably end up attacking by yourself most of the time.

Fig. 10-24. Stealth attackers try to sneak into the enemy base.

The other time is when you're trying to attack with stealth or speed, not power.

Whereas a typical power attacker tries to kill all nearby defenders, wreck turrets, and then blast into the enemy base and trash it, stealth or speed attackers have other methods. Stealth attackers typically use Scout armor and either a cloaking pack or sensor jammer pack, depending on what sort of resistance is expected (or an energy pack to combine speed and stealth). They approach the enemy base alone, usually taking out-of-the-way routes and staying below ridgelines to avoid sensor detection. After reaching the enemy base, they activate their packs and sneak inside, often jetting up and entering through a high, seldom-used entrance.

Inside the base, the stealthy raider's goal is to either destroy equipment or grab the flag. Either way, cover is inevitably blown sooner or later, so it's crucial to work fast. Take out key base facilities quickly with a plasma rifle, or grab the flag and run away as fast as possible. A really good stealth attacker, may have hidden a Shrike or Wildcat nearby, for a speedy retreat.

The stealth attacker's role often overlaps with that of the speed attacker. Speed attackers use Scout armor and energy packs, and their main goal is to destroy the enemy using speed, skill, and agility. They tend to sneak up to bases like stealth attackers, but once there, they run through enemy territory, jump-jetting like mad, laying waste to anything in their path. They destroy base items by running through the base, leaving pursuers behind, and pausing only momentarily to blast key equipment. When they want a flag, they run in and grab it, then count on their jetting ability to carry them out of harm's way. This sort of attacker is most effective on maps with wide-open bases and limited defenses, and especially on maps where the flags are out in the open.
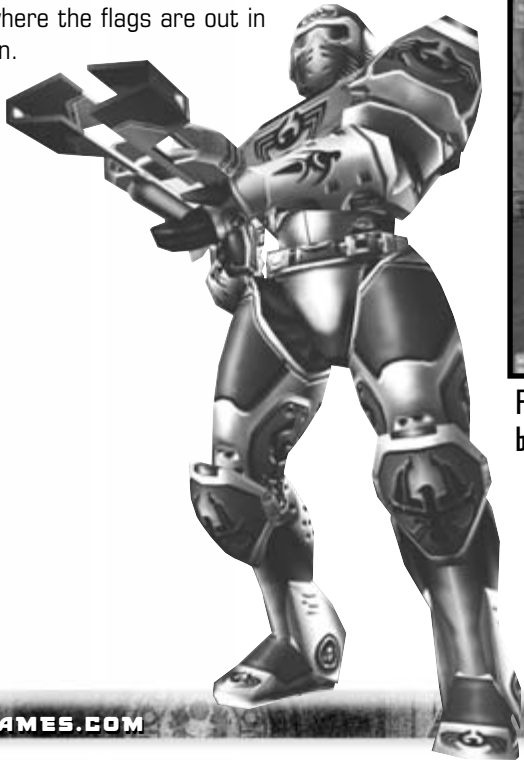
TIP

Speed and stealth raiders can be highly effective, but unless they have a serious skill edge over the defenders, they can't get it done alone. Have a mixture of straightforward power attackers and speed/stealth attackers. This keeps the enemy off guard, allowing the speed and stealth attackers to capitalize on the destruction and confusion caused by the power attackers.

Attack Infrastructure

Fig. 10-25. Destroying generators brings the enemy base to its knees.

Some maps feature flags that are hard to defend. These maps can sometimes be won by speed or stealth tactics, or with a quick, powerful rush directly at the heart of the flag defenses. However, many maps make it hard to do this. They protect the flags indoors, in hard-to-reach spots, and they surround the flag bases with powerful turrets. Sometimes the flag is guarded, or at least partially guarded, by force fields.

In these cases, pick away at the infrastructure of the enemy base in your early attacks. Attack generators and inventory stations, take down deployed and permanent turrets, and trash vehicle stations whenever possible. In short, wreck everything that can possibly be wrecked.

The more you wreck the enemy base, the more you pave the way for a successful flag run. Destroyed turrets can't defend, marred inventory stations can't dispense gear, and obliterated generators prevent EVERYTHING from working. The enemy is thrown into chaos when the base stops working, and they're forced to spend valuable time making repairs instead of attacking you or defending their flag.

If you thoroughly destroy the enemy base, it may never recover. A thorough trashing, followed by a steady stream of attackers, can keep the base inoperable and the flag vulnerable for long periods of time. It's not uncommon to get several flag captures in a row after trashing the enemy base, because problems don't get fixed and the defenders never manage to regroup.

Harass the Defenders

Fig. 10-26. Distracting the defenders can help out your teammates.

Most of the time you want to do something concrete, like destroy a generator, when you attack. However, sometimes simply distracting the enemy is helpful.

Only distract the enemy when your teammates' attacks aren't working. Distracting the enemy can weaken defenses and allow your teammates to succeed.

For example, let's say your teammates are constantly flying in and trying to steal the enemy flag with speed methods. This isn't working because the defenders are ready for them. To remedy the situation, suit up in Juggernaut armor and get into a position where you could lob fusion mortar shells at the enemy base's turrets. Maybe you'd manage to take out a few turrets, and maybe you wouldn't, but you'd certainly cause the defenders to run out and deal with you. If properly timed, this allows your teammates to succeed with their speed attacks.

Deal with Poor Organization

Fig. 10-27. If the team isn't well organized, do whatever tasks aren't being done.

Do not start playing TRIBES 2 with the notion that teams are always organized, and there's always a commander of sorts. The best games tend to be fairly well organized, but even then, there often isn't a true commander—no general sitting at the command screen full-time, ordering people here and there.

That's not to say that one couldn't exist. Such a general could be very effective in organizing a large-scale game with multiple players per side. He or she could sit in the heart of the base and issue orders, leaving the command circuit to deal only with direct threats on the base.

Maybe you can get that sort of organization in your games, but much of the time you're probably playing pickup games on the Internet against people you don't know. Many of these people aren't interested in taking orders. What should you do in these situations? The only constructive way to deal with this situation is to adapt to your team's needs. If everyone's playing on offense, play defense. If base infrastructure has been neglected, start laying down turrets. If most of

your attackers are trying to speed rush the enemy flag, try to damage the enemy base so their attacks will be more effective.

In addition, you can ask for help. Ask your team for more defense, or suggest group attacks rather than individual attacks. This always works best if you're specific, if you're already doing whatever needs doing, and if you put your request in active terms. Instead of saying, "Some people should go on defense," you can say, "I'm defending the upper base but I need help." Instead of "Hey, everybody, attack in groups!" try this: "I'm piloting a Vulture near the vehicle pad. Get on board if you want to join me!" Start doing whatever needs doing, then request help. This works better than ordering people around without doing things yourself.

Understand Your Limits

Fig. 10-28. You can't do it all, especially on a big team.

CTF games can be fun and rewarding. They can also be frustrating if you don't understand your limits. Remember that this is a team game, and you can't win all alone. If nobody's playing defense, you can't do it all by yourself. If nobody's listening, you can't get people organized. Those are just the facts.

The bigger the game, the less control you have. In a three-on-three match, you have a profound effect on the flow of the game. In a ten-on-ten match, you're just a cog in the machine—and if the machine's broken, you probably can't fix it.

Look for good games with considerate players. Remember names, and seek those people out again and again. If you get stuck in a bad game or on a bad team, either look for a better one or try to take pleasure in doing your own job well, even if the rest of your team is getting pummeled.

Sometimes you join a game that's so funda-mentally skewed that nothing can help it. All the talent's on one side and it's having a field day; the opposing base is in ruins and has no chance of being rebuilt. If you join a game like that, either find another one or wait for the game to end (it shouldn't take long if things are really that unbalanced), and then join the next one. Personally ask one or two of the better players to switch sides and even things up. It usually works.

Siege

Fig. 10-29. Siege games distill attack and defense into an art form.

Siege takes the attacking and defending elements of Capture the Flag and distills them into something purer and a little simpler. One side attacks while the other defends, then the sides are reversed. The two sieges are then compared. Whichever side touched the control switch fastest wins.

Siege is simpler than Capture the Flag because you never need to worry about your role. Should you be attacking or defending? It's simple: if you're on the attacking side, you attack, and if you're on the defending side, you defend.

That's not to say there's no thinking involved in Siege games. Read on for strategy suggestions.

Learning the Map

Fig. 10-30. Complex interiors should be carefully studied.

Remember how it's important to learn the map before playing CTF games? It's even MORE important to learn the map for Siege games.

First, if you don't know the map in a CTF game, you can always figure out the enemy base by studying your own base. The two sides' bases are usually almost identical. In Siege, however, there's only one target base and it can take just about any shape. There's no way of deducing how things are set up unless you charge in and look—and without

any knowledge of what you're up against, your chances of survival aren't good.

Second, in CTF games you can usually compensate for a lack of map knowledge by hanging back on defense. Not so in Siege, where you're required to attack during your team's attack phase.

Finally, Siege maps tend to make more use of force fields than CTF maps. Typically, your team has to take down the generators powering the fields, and only then is the control switch accessible. You need to know where the generators are and where they are in relation to the switch, which again demands map knowledge.

Because of all these factors, we strongly recommend hosting a solo game and running through the most popular Siege maps all alone. This may be dull, but it'll teach you where to go and make you a much more valuable Siege player.

Choose an Attack Method

When attacking, pick a strike method. The best attack methods vary from map to map, but here are some general tips.

STEALTH

Fig. 10-31. A well-defended entrance is hard to sneak through.

Stealth attacks are difficult to pull off in Siege games, because the entire enemy team is concentrated on defense, and you're unlikely to find a huge gap in the coverage. Still, they sometimes work.

Cloaking packs are more useful than sensor jammer packs in Siege games, because you face a lot of enemy players. Sensor jammer packs save you from turrets, but if there's a group of opponents guarding the structure you're trying to destroy, you'll have a rough time.

Stealth approaches are best if the base you're trying to siege has a number of entrances or a little-used "back door."

SPEED

Speed attacks can be useful when attacking far-flung bases with thinly-spread defenses. They're also useful for blasting in and capturing the control switch after conventional attacks have disabled all the force fields.

Again, though, the value of speed attacks is purely situational. Assess the defenses, determine whether there's a chance of speeding by them, and equip yourself appropriately. Time your attacks to coincide with those of other teammates.

POWER

Fig. 10-32. Destroy the enemy base, just as you would in a CTF game.

Straightforward team attacks are usually best. Grinding assaults let you take apart turrets and other infrastructure, smash generators, and eventually win your way deep into the base.

This attack method is much the same as in CTF games. And just like in CTF games, when you've reduced the enemy base to shambles, the best way to finish off the game is to send a speedy teammate in for a quick capture.

Don't be afraid to use suicide attacks in Siege games; you can usually get back on the attack quickly. Satchel charges, grenade launchers, and fusion mortars all do massive damage quickly, and charging in recklessly results in a lot of destruction.

Deploy Infrastructure (If Applicable)

When on defense, all the same rules as in CTF apply. Deploying defenses is particularly important. Don't neglect those deployable motion sensors in addition to the turrets, because you're at risk from cloaked enemies without them.

You're better off concentrating your defenses outside the base rather than packing everyone inside. Packing people inside renders them vulnerable to massive explosive attacks, so locate the entrances to your base and defend them from the OUTSIDE. Only pack your defenses inside if there's a particularly defensible room, or if your exterior defense has crumbled.

Prioritize Defenses

Most Siege missions feature several levels of defense. The control switch is inside a base, protected by force fields, and the force fields are powered by generators in other locations. It's best to prioritize your defenses based on which link in the chain the attackers must destroy first. For example, if the control switch is completely secure until a force field goes down, you can completely ignore the switch and instead concentrate on

Fig. 10-33. Fall back to defend the control switch once the force fields are down.

defending the force field's generators.

When the first level of defenses is breached— say, the force field generators go down—drop back to defend your main base and the control switch itself.

Team Hunters

Fig. 10-34. Team Hunters requires slightly different tactics than Hunters.

Team Hunters is a lot like Hunters, except with teams instead of individuals. The mechanics are largely the same, save not everyone being your foe.

Read the Hunters tips in Chapter 9, then refer to the tips in this chapter for advice specific to the team variant.

Hunt in Packs

Team Hunters gives you the benefit of teammates, so use them! Stick together, and everything goes much easier. Lone opponents fall easily to your combined might, and enemy packs won't be able to steamroll you like they would an individual.

Special techniques aren't necessary for pack hunting, though you certainly can employ a few. Just be wary of accidentally shooting your teammates.

One thing you CAN do in Team Hunters is make liberal use of the ELF projector. It's an ideal pack weapon, because one pack member can reduce the foe's mobility, while the others pummel away with heavy weapons fire. It makes taking down individual foes very easy.

Avoid Enemy Packs

Encountering groups of enemies in regular Hunters is dangerous but not always deadly. Because everyone is out for himself or herself, you aren't necessarily going to be ganged up on. (Of course, that's always a possibility…) If you encounter a group of enemies in Team Hunters, on the other hand, you've got a reason to worry. All of those enemies are going to gun for you.

The solution is to run from enemy packs or to join a pack of teammates that's at least as large. Then, when the bullets start flying, you stand a reasonable chance of survival.

Give Flags to the Best Player

Fig. 10-35. Drop your flags on the ground, so a "collector" teammate can grab them.

You can and should drop flags in Team Hunters. Drop the flags and give them to one of your best players, who's responsible for keeping them safe and then cashing them in at the nexus for massive bonus points.

The benefits are twofold. First, you get many more points for having one player cash in a big load of flags than having many individuals cash in only a few at a time. Second, a good player is in charge of your flags, so you don't have to worry about mediocre players constantly getting killed (and coughing up multiple flags for the enemy to redeem).

Another option is to have a more conservative player handle the flags. Thus, you and your teammates can bravely fight on the front lines, bringing home flags galore and stowing them away with the relative safety of a player who's avoiding intense combat.

11
Maps

TRIBES 2 comes with about 50 maps, and more will doubtless be released in the future. The wide variety of maps keeps the game fresh and keeps you on your toes.

Understanding the map is a vital part of any game. You can be a great player, but if you don't know the map, you won't be very effective. Knowing where the inventory stations, bases, and flags are can easily mean the difference between success and failure.

The only way to really familiarize yourself with a map is to play a game on it several times. We can't provide a substitute for this experience, but we can give you an overview of every map in the game, along with notes on where the important stuff is. Refer to these maps and notes so you'll know right away what sort of map you're dealing with and where the most important points are. After that, it's up to you to play and get firsthand experience with the map.

Each map is marked with symbols that represent common and important features of the TRIBES 2 landscape. Note that not every detail of the map is shown. Only major, tactically significant equipment and locations are indicated.

Pulse Sensor. Large pulse sensors, which cover a large area, are the backbone of each team's sensor network.

Generator. This symbol represents an important generator or generators. Generators are not always marked on maps where they aren't tactically significant.

Flag. The flag icon represents flag locations in Capture the Flag games or the control switch in Siege games.

Tower. In most missions the tower is simply a freestanding structure that may or may not contain useful items. In Capture & Hold missions, however, the tower icon always represents one of your goals.

Base. In Capture & Hold missions, the base icon represents a spot that is NOT a mission goal, but is instead a place where one or more teams can gear up.

Turret. This icon signals a large emplaced turret.

Sentry Turret. This icon tells you there's a sentry turret in the area.

Inventory Station. One or more inventory stations are at this spot.

Vehicle Station. There's a vehicle station at the indicated area.

ABOMINABLE
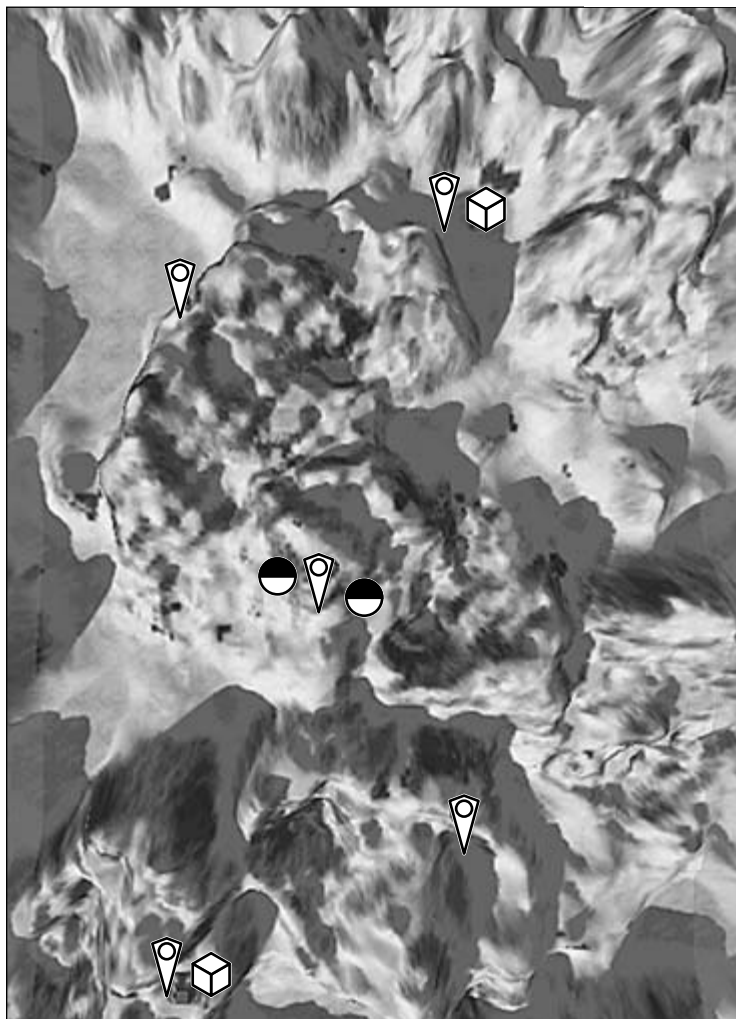
This arctic map is home to a classic Capture & Hold mission. There are five towers to hold onto, and the terrain in between is extremely mountainous and rough.

The northeast and southwest towers are bunker-style, multilevel structures. Each has inventory stations on the main floor and downstairs, and a single sentry turret guards the main entrance. The upper floor contains the switch that you must touch to gain control of the tower; downstairs is another inventory station and the generator.

The northwest and southeast towers are true towers, with the switch atop them. They have no facilities.

The center tower has two turrets defending it, and it also possesses a sensor array.

In a game of this sort, the center tower is always hardest to hold. Try to grab both the northeast and southwest towers, to monopolize the inventory stations. Barring that, you need to control at least one of them, and then take some of the others as well. The center tower is likely to change hands several times over the course of the mission, so holding the outlying towers is often the key.

Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Five towers with a control switch (inventory stations in the northeast and southwest)

Terrain: Rough, icy

Climate: Arctic, snowing

Agents of Fortune
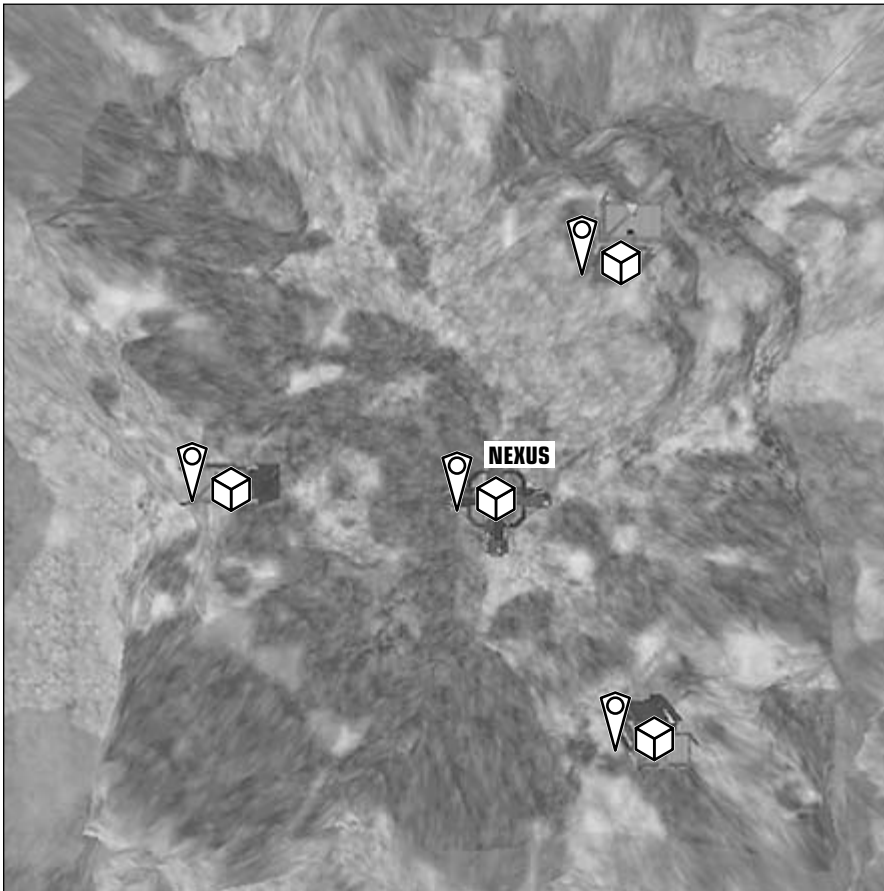
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Team Hunters

Features: Four towers with inventory stations

Terrain: Extremely mountainous, tough traveling

Climate: Temperate, good visibility

This Deathmatch/Hunters map features four towers; the three outside ones are on extremely high ground. The central tower, which also serves as the nexus in Hunters games, is on lower ground.

All four towers contain inventory stations. The central tower has lots of indoor space.

A good policy in this map is to hang around the fringes as much as possible. When you're in the center, most of your foes will have a height advantage on you. It's always tough when you're on low ground, surrounded by high ground, and your enemies could be anywhere. If you do venture to the center, get inside and switch to appropriate weapons (like the plasma rifle) quickly.

This map contains inventory stations, so you can pursue heavier-armor strategies. If you do, stay inside as much as possible.

Alcatraz

As an attacker, immediately destroy the outdoor solar panels on the western edge of the map. Meanwhile send attackers in to flood entrance 1. Avoid entrance 2 for now because it's guarded by force fields.

When you get inside entrance 1 you can start knocking out generators, which in turn opens entrance 2. Watch out for the three sentry turrets inside, though.

After the force fields guarding entrance 2 are down, it becomes the preferred method of entry, since it leads directly to the switch.

As a defender, go topside and foil attacks atop the island. Leave a few people at entrance 1, then set up spider-clamp turrets and various sensors along the path leading inside from entrance 1. When the generators start to fall, pull back and guard entrances 1 and 2.

Game: Siege

Features: Fortified underground base, staging area

Terrain: Island, some surrounding area

Climate: Temperate, good visibility

Alcatraz is a Siege map. Like all Siege maps, it doesn't double for any other game type; it's specially designed for having one team on offense and another on defense.

As the name suggests, the base to be defended is on an island. The base itself is underground. Access is through two bunkers atop the island.

Defenders start out on the island, while attackers start at a staging area in the map's southeast corner.

> ### TIP
> Wander through all Siege missions ALONE before taking on real opponents. They usually feature complex, heavily guarded environments that you can't deal with unless you know exactly where you're going.

Archipelago
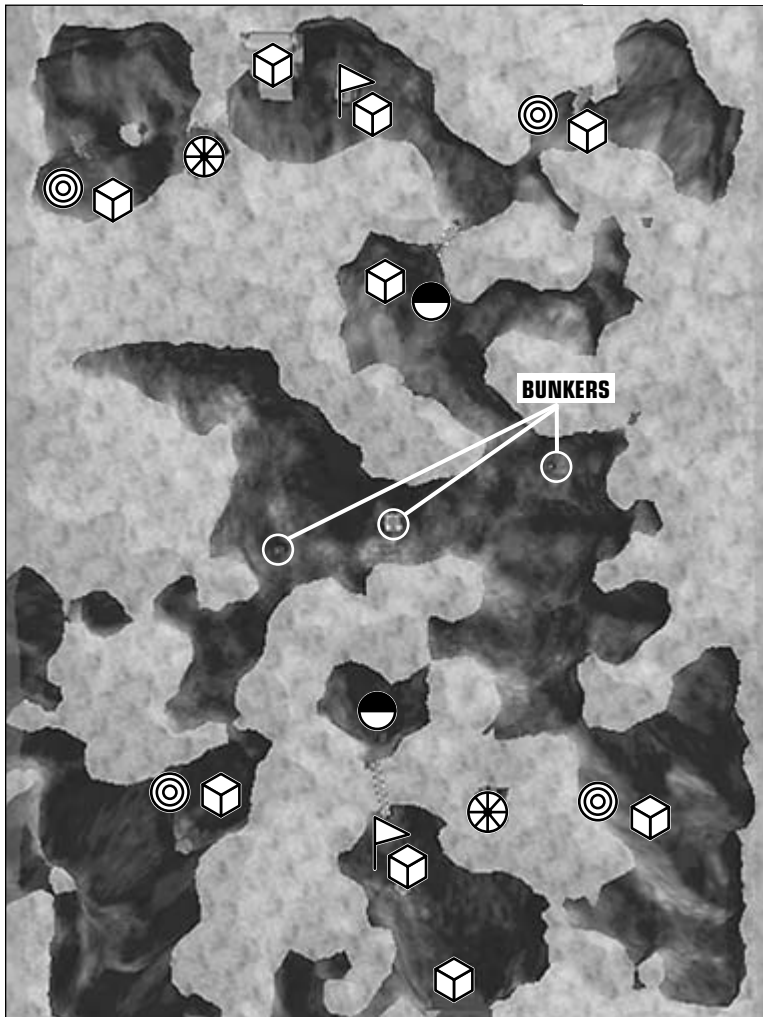
Archipelago features two extremely spread out bases. Instead of packing all the various inventory stations and other useful equipment into one huge fort, each team has several sub-buildings dispersed along the top or bottom of the map.

Defenses are light, with only a single AA turret guarding the area in front of each base. Also, the flags are in small structures, exposed to the open air. Solid exterior defense is a must.

Three bunkers cluster in the middle of the map, all containing a few supplies. The central bunker is most useful, as it contains an assortment of packs.

This map invites a wide variety of strategies. The usual grab-the-flag-and-ski technique is not very useful here, but you can use vehicles to escape instead. Walking underwater is a valuable way of getting to the enemy base unseen, and the general lack of air defenses and solid ground makes flying vehicles particularly appealing on this map.

Game: Capture the Flag
Features: Two highly decentralized flag bases
Terrain: Water, islands (very little skiing)
Climate: Slightly foggy

Ashes to Ashes
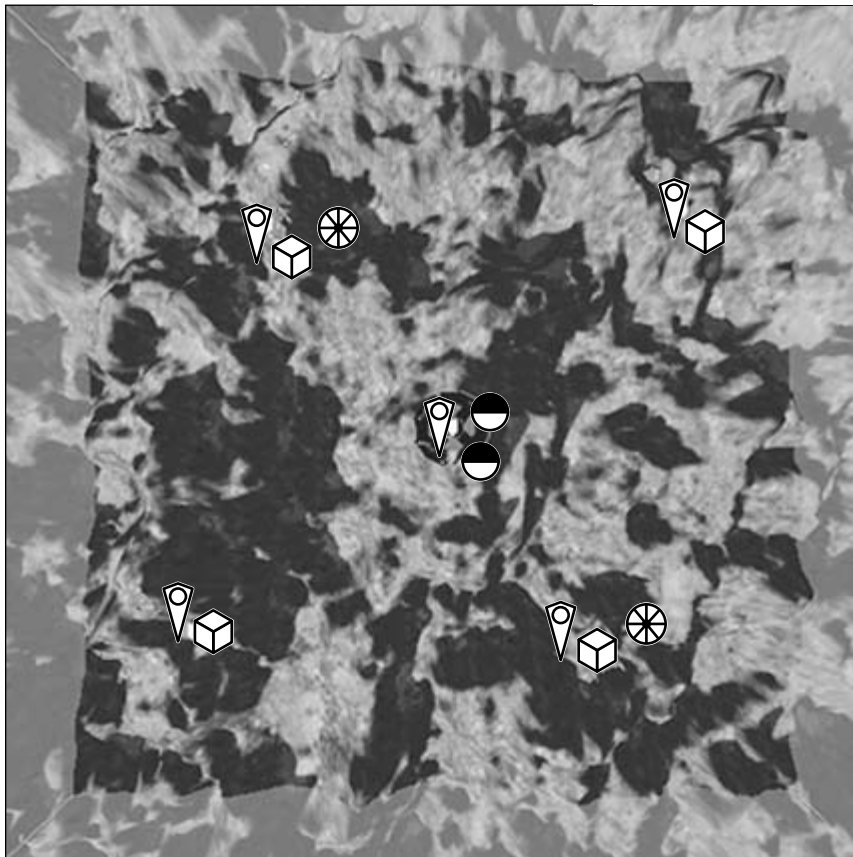
Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Five towers, with associated inventory stations and vehicle stations

Terrain: Severe canyons, plateaus, difficult skiing

Climate: Hot, dusty, hazy

In most Capture & Hold games, the center tower is very difficult to hold—that's not really the case here. The central tower is a massive, multilevel structure, with the flag inside and near the middle. Attackers must get inside and jet either up or down to get at it, and it's no small task. The central tower is also topped by a sensor array and two turrets. The only thing it lacks is inventory stations.

The northeast and southwest towers are small and simple, with the flags exposed to the outdoors. Small inventory stations are tucked into bunkers near these towers.

The northwest and southeast towers are larger, with the flags slightly better protected and located near the top. They also possess sensor arrays, and have inventory stations downstairs and vehicle stations nearby.

Usually it's best to hold onto the northwest and southeast towers, for both their vehicle stations and their slightly better defensibility. The center tower is also a viable position to hold, thanks to its height, turrets, and enclosed flag.

Stick to high ground whenever possible, and watch out for dangerous falls. The terrain is so extreme here that skiing isn't always possible.

Beggar's Run

Beggar's Run is a simple, straightforward CTF map. There are no vehicles. Each team has a long, narrow base with a walkway atop it. The flag is positioned, semi-exposed, in the middle of each base's walkway. Inventory facilities are well beneath the flag, in a room guarded by a single sentry turret.

When playing this map, make a note of which side of the enemy base is guarded by the single plasma turret. Approach from the other side, or take out the turret with fusion mortar shells.

Since each team has limited access to inventory stations (in the basement under the flags), taking out these stations is very helpful. Have a teammate constantly harass this area. Lobbing destruction down into the small, cramped basement with a grenade launcher is a great way to eliminate those inventory stations.

The flag is best protected by active defenders positioned around the base and spider-clamp turrets on the walkway to either side.

Game: Capture the Flag
Features: Two linear flag bases
Terrain: Mountainous but smooth; good skiing
Climate: Hot, hazy

Caldera
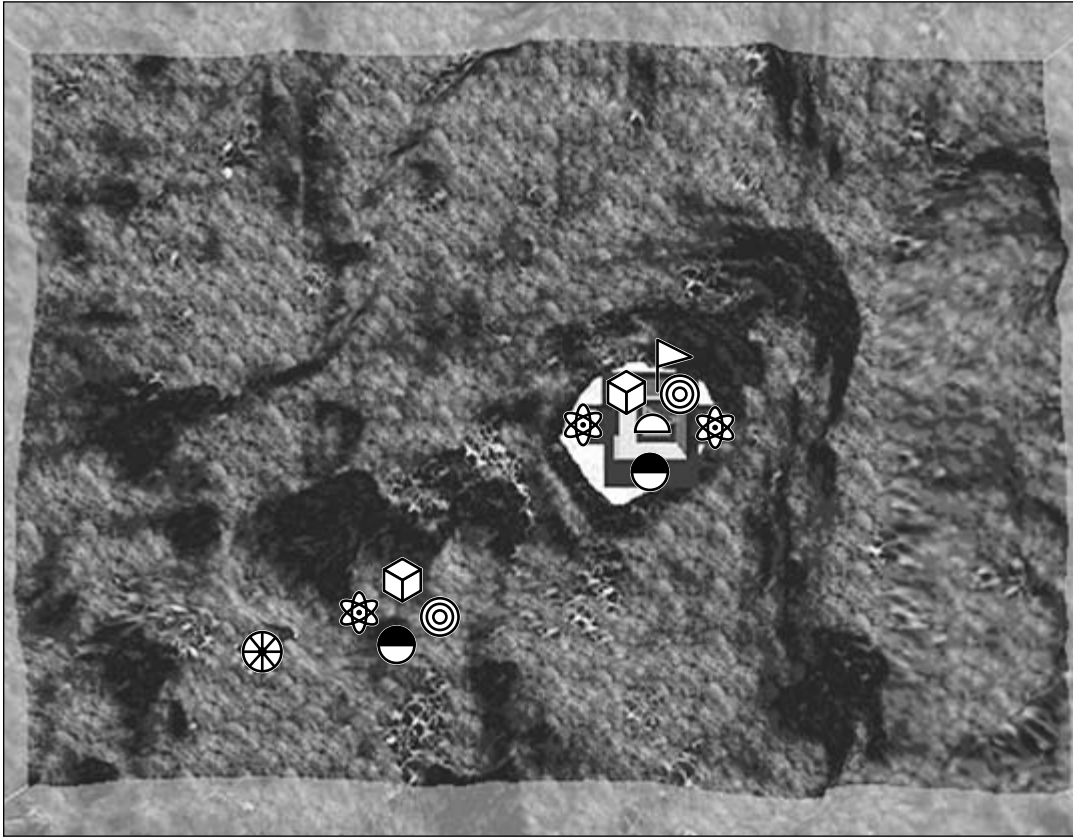
Game: Siege

Features: Floating pyramid base, staging area

Terrain: Low mountains, volcanic

Climate: Slightly hazy

This Siege mission charges the attackers with taking out a "floating pyramid" base. The attackers are given a small tower with inventory stations and a vehicle station.

The pyramid hovers over lava. The main entrance, on the south side, is guarded by a plasma turret, making it the worst choice. Better choices are the entrance just below it, which is hidden from the turret, and an entrance high atop the pyramid, best reached via air vehicles. (Be careful: inside the upper entrance is a motion-detecting sentry turret.)

Inside the pyramid, steer toward the tactical generator first—it's the western one. Knock it out to shut down a force field guarding the main generator. Then go to the main generator (the eastern one). Destroy it to take down a second force field, this one protecting the control switch nearby.

As defenders, guard the entrance just under the main entrance very carefully. Also position someone near the sentry turret inside, to catch anyone attacking from the upper route. If your perimeter is broken, retreat to guard the tactical generator, and if that falls, pack everyone in to guard the main generator and control switch.

Casern Cavite
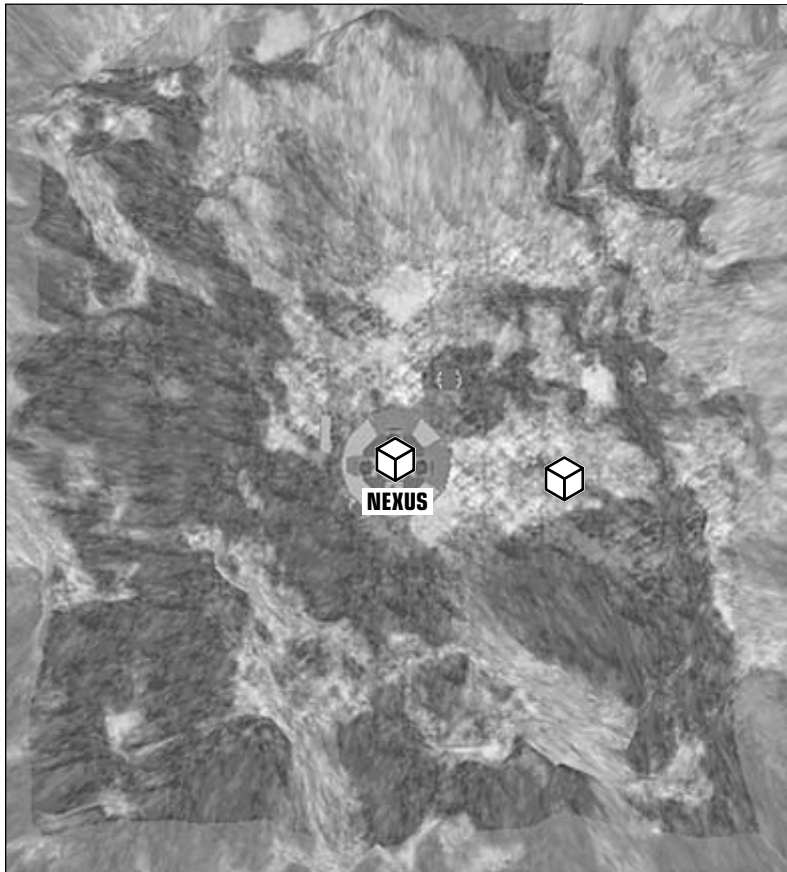
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Bounty

Features: Massive central base

Terrain: Mountainous, large indoor area

Climate: Rainy, massive lightning strikes

This multipurpose map features a huge central structure that dominates the landscape. It's a multilevel building, highly vertical in design, featuring lots of inventory stations. You can enter it from the base or from the top; a pair of small floating platforms assists players trying to make it in through the top.

A small bunker nearby houses an additional inventory station. This is perfect for gearing up before you go inside the main structure.

Massive lightning strikes periodically scourge the area. You can and will get hit if you linger outside too long! This is an added incentive to stay inside the main structure.

Of course, the main structure tends to be the most dangerous spot as well as the most target-rich. The nexus is inside during Hunter games, near the center-bottom of the building.

Ultimately, this level tests your combat and jump-jetting skills. There's no safe place; you just have to be good enough to survive.

DAMNATION
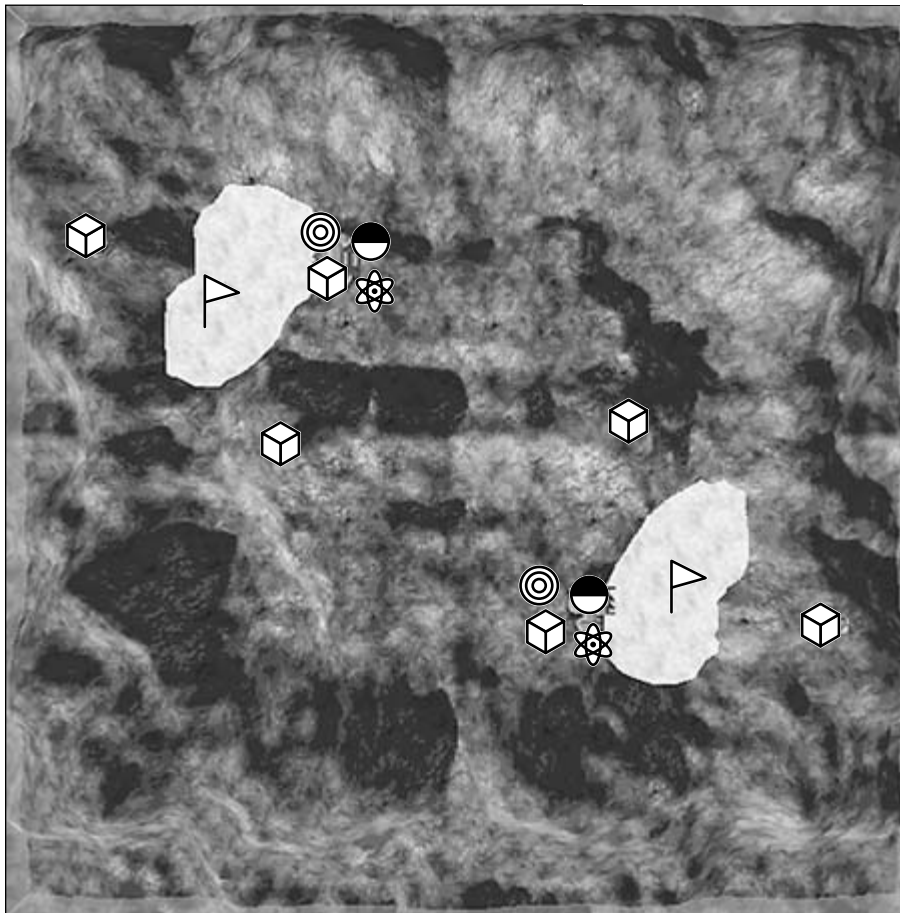
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two large flag bases, numerous small towers

Terrain: Tall hills, lakes

Climate: Rainy, foggy

This CTF map gives each team a large base adjacent to a lake, two small towers with inventory stations, and a flag positioned in the middle of the lake.

The large bases adjacent to the lakes have inventory stations as well, and basement tunnels that empty out on the shore. Defenders can hide there and spring out to deal with enemies attacking the flag, and attackers can infiltrate through these tunnels.

The lakes are deceptive. They make it much more challenging to take the flag, because the water tends to slow you down. Extremely careful jump-jetting (and an energy pack) is crucial if you want to be a flag runner.

> **TIP**
>
> **Mines placed near the flag will blow flag runners into the water, making them easy targets.**

Death Birds Fly
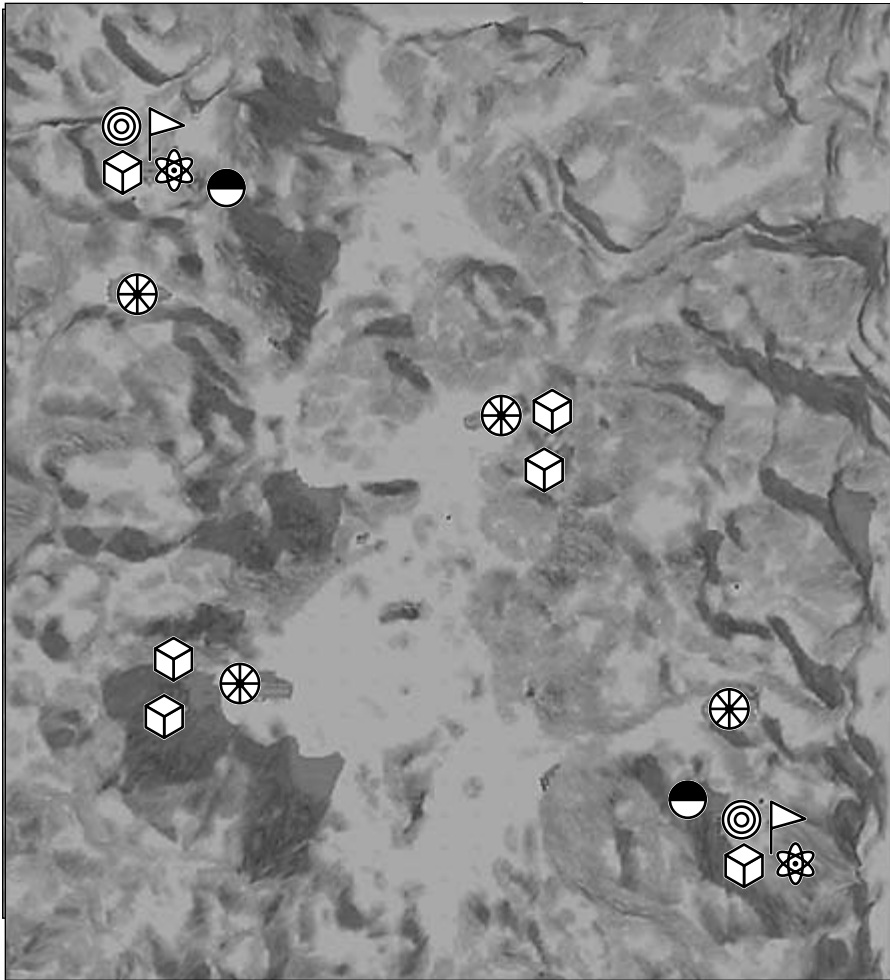
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Flag bases, towers, two vehicle stations per side

Terrain: Alternating plains and mountains

Climate: Hot, good visibility

This large CTF map features two vehicle stations for each side. That, combined with a big valley down the middle that minimizes skiing opportunities, makes vehicle use a necessary part of your team strategy.

Each team has a main flag base with generators and inventory stations, plus a mortar turret. Each team also has a pair of towers with inventory stations and no defenses, and two vehicle stations, which are distant from each other.

Destroying enemy vehicle stations won't get you far in this mission. Instead, concentrate on taking down the enemy flag base, including its generators, and getting away (preferably with some vehicular assistance).

DESICATOR
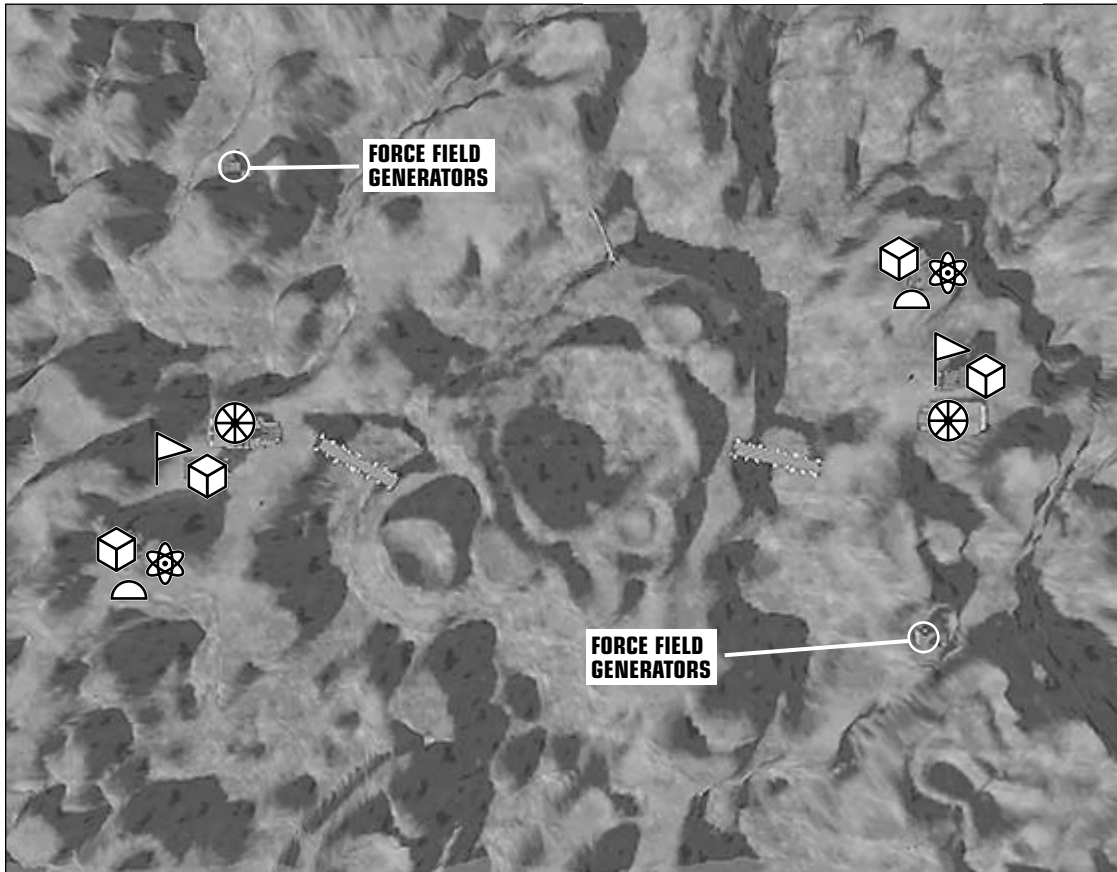
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Towers, flags protected by force fields

Terrain: Tall mesas, deep valleys

Climate: Very dusty, very low visual range

Desicator features flag bases protected by force fields. You must take down the force field generators marked on the map to disable the fields, thus clearing the way for flag runs.

The low visibility range makes sensors very important. Immediately enhance your sensor network by deploying various sensors.

You can easily sneak vehicles past the enemy in such poor conditions. Use flying vehicles to get above the rough terrain and quickly take out key generators. The lack of exterior turrets makes vehicles particularly appealing.

The flag generators are tough to defend, but that's where you should make a stand. As long as those generators are intact, your flag is safe.

DUST TO DUST
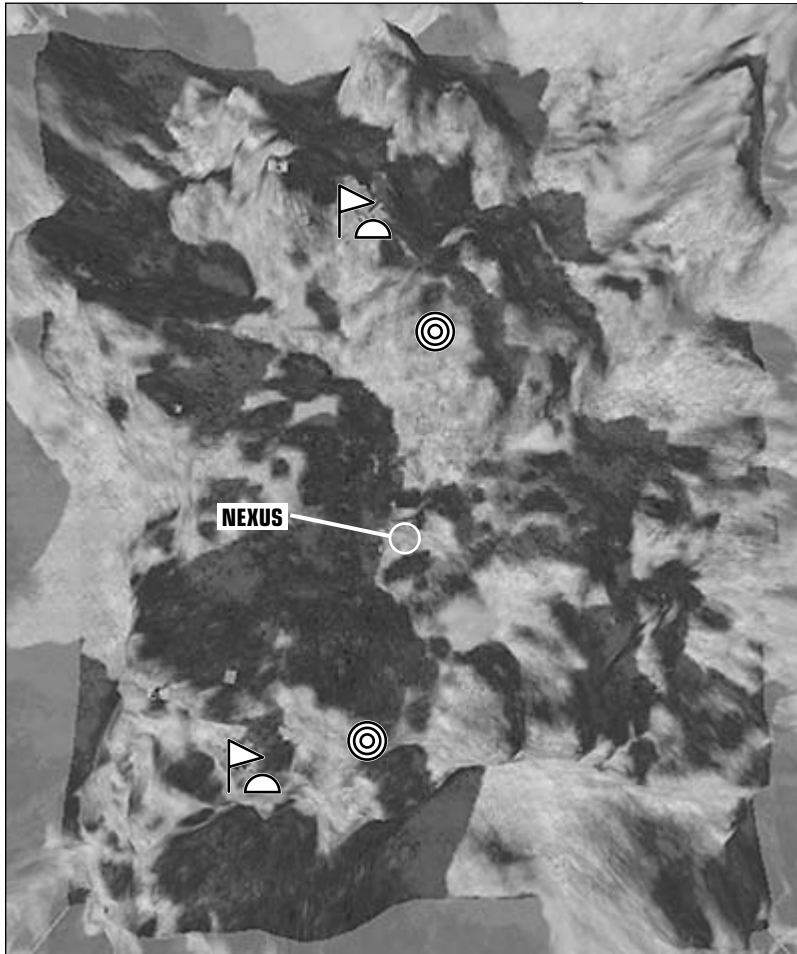
Games: Capture the Flag, Hunters, Team Hunters
Features: Spartan flag bases, scattered weapons
Terrain: Rugged and dangerous, but skiing is possible
Climate: Dusty, average visibility

This map works for either Capture the Flag or Hunters games. The locations of the nexus (for Hunters games) and the flag (in CTF games) are marked on the map.

The exact positioning of various weapons and packs varies depending on the game type, so these locations are not marked. However, as rule of thumb, packs are found indoors, especially in the two flag towers and the tower near the floating nexus. Weapons typically sit outdoors on level patches of ground, with their ammo nearby.

When playing Dust to Dust as a CTF map, you'll need lots of manpower on defense. The flags and sensor arrays are the only legitimate targets, so expect the enemy to come full strength.

The same goes for offense: attack in strength. Defense is likely to be stiff, and you won't have vehicles or great weapons to help you rush away with the flag.

When playing Dust to Dust as a Hunters game, our recommendation is to locate extra weapons and packs quickly, then leave the area and pick on players that haven't yet grabbed weapons and packs. Memorize the locations of your favorite items, and return there again and again.

EQUINOX

Games: Capture & Hold, Deathmatch
Features: Four towers, repair pack at center of map
Terrain: Rolling hills
Climate: Temperate, rainy, slightly foggy
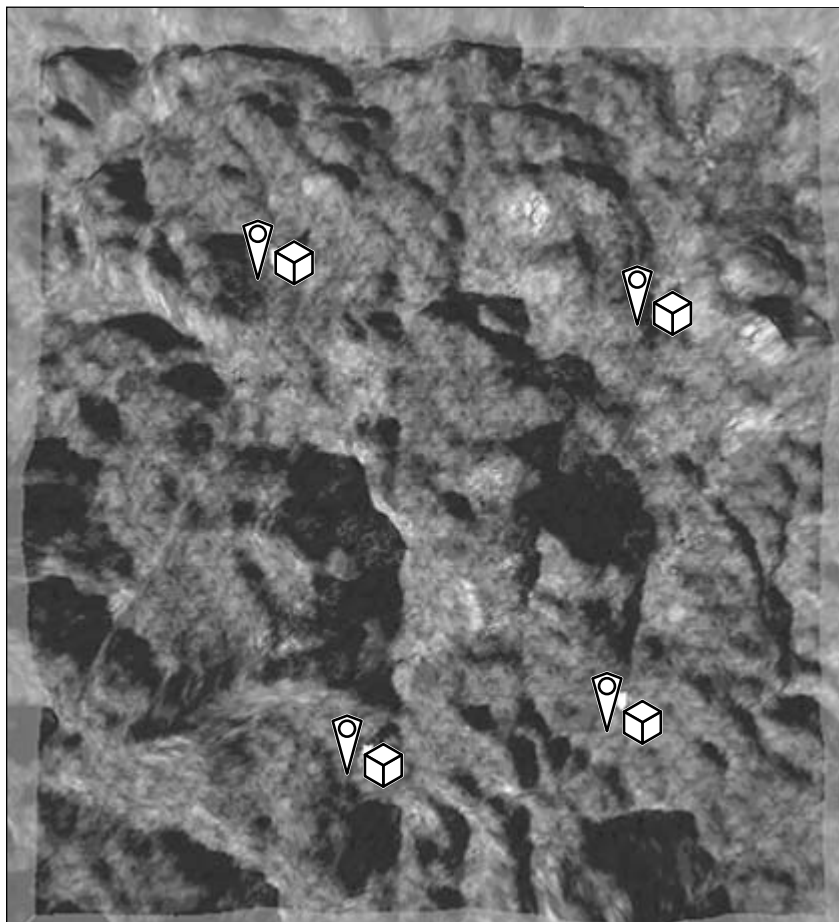
Equinox is a Capture & Hold map without the typical center tower. It also doubles as a Deathmatch map.

There are four towers, one at each corner of the map, but there's no center tower and there are no turrets.

The center of the map contains standing stones and a repair pack, but nothing else of significance.

The four corner towers are all fairly similar, so you can take any of them. All four have inventory stations, but none have turrets. They're all tall and thin, with multiple entrances, so they're easy to infiltrate.

The northwest and southeast towers are a bit less defensible than the other two, and therefore less desirable. That's because the northwest tower's flag is in plain view outside, and the southeast tower's flag is on ground level, right as you run inside.

The terrain is very rolling, highly suited to fast skiing. There are no overwhelming terrain features.

Overall, this is a very pure map—no vehicles, no turrets, no distractions. Just focus on holding more towers than the other team.

Escalade

Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Team Hunters, Bounty, Rabbit

Features: Multiple towers (with inventory stations), floating platforms

Terrain: Mountainous

Climate: Temperate; good overall visibility, some mist in valleys

Escalade is a real jack-of-all-trades; it can be used in a wide variety of game types. It's a big, wide-open map with tall mountains and good overall visibility, though the valleys are slightly misty.

The rugged terrain makes it hard to chase targets unless you're quite skillful. This favors the "rabbit" in Rabbit games. Practice your skiing and mountain climbing techniques, because you'll need them here!

Towers with inventory stations lie scattered all across the center of the map, so there's no single spot where everyone congregates—save for the nexus in the Hunters games, of course.

Floating platforms dot the landscape in between the towers. Most of these have healing items on them, so it can pay to bounce up onto them quickly, grab the healing items, and then bounce away.

The towers on this map are relatively small, so you'll spend lots of time outdoors. You can pursue just about any strategy on this map; its terrain and inventory allow a wide variety of tactics.

FIRESTORM

Games: Capture & Hold, Capture the Flag

Features: Two bases, one island control point

Terrain: Volcanic basin (largely flat in the mission area)

Climate: Clear visibility

Firestorm is a different sort of Capture & Hold map. Instead of featuring several towers, each with its own control point and various assets, this map features only one control point, located on the central island. Each team also has a base that cannot change hands. The bases are tall and thin, and contain inventory stations on the top floor.

> **TIP**
>
> In a Capture the Flag game, the flags are out in the open, atop each team's base.

The control island is surrounded by lava and must be reached either by prolonged jetting or by a narrow, unprotected bridge. The island is guaranteed to change sides several times during the mission for several reasons: It's the only control point, it's in the middle, and it's completely unprotected.

> **TIP**
>
> In a Capture the Flag game, the central island is devoid of useful features. It's just a convenient place to land if you want to jet across the lava.

Since each side's base CANNOT change hands, trash the other team's base to gain an advantage. Split your team into those who fly in and claim the central island, those who defend your base while lobbing projectiles at enemies on the island, and those that concentrate on demolishing your enemy's base.

The inventory stations at the enemy base are the key. Without inventory stations, your enemies will have a very tough time. They won't be able to get energy packs (necessary for jetting to the central island) nor heavy armor (necessary for mounting the fusion mortar, which can clear out enemies holding the central island).

Flashpoint

In some Capture & Hold missions the central tower is hard to defend—not so here. The central tower is actually a floating fortress high above the ground, surrounded by four smaller floating platforms at a lower level, which serve as stepping-stones for would-be attackers.

The central tower has no turrets, but it does have sensor arrays and multiple inventory stations. Plus, its elevation and great view of the surrounding area make it easy to intercept attackers.

The satellite towers are all earthbound and much smaller, with their flags exposed to the outside. The northeast and southwest towers contain inventory stations and vehicle stations but no turrets. The southeast and northwest towers have two turrets apiece but no inventory or vehicle stations. (They do, however, have scattered packs lying atop them: repair packs, cloaking packs, energy packs, and shield packs.)

Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Five towers, all with different assets

Terrain: Flat lava plains with low, rough hills

Climate: No precipitation, good visibility

Flashpoint is a typical Capture & Hold map with a few twists, although its shape is very common: a diamond, with a single central tower and one in each of the map's four corners.

When playing this mission, take one of the two towers with a vehicle station and hold it permanently, then use flying vehicles to speed over to the center and claim the central fortress. Hold the central fortress and two other towers throughout the rest of the game. If you can hold the two towers with vehicle stations, you can defend the central fortress with only one or two competent teammates, because you won't have to fear vehicle attacks.

FRACAS
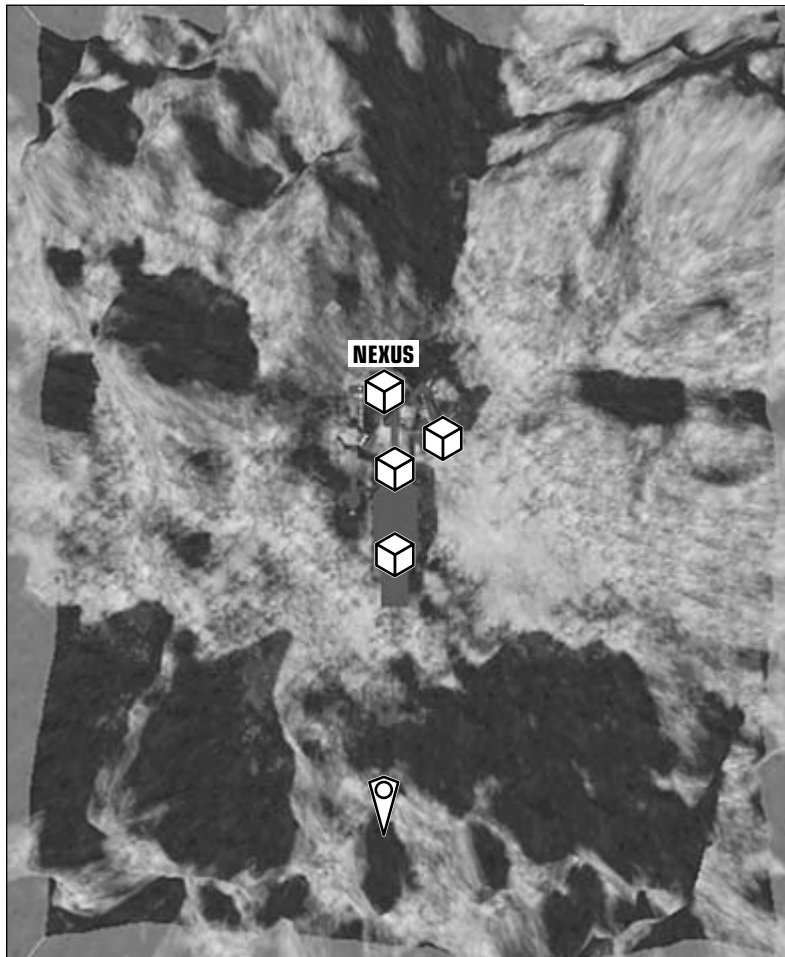
Fracas is a lot like Casern Cavite: a comparatively small map with a big central structure that dominates the area. They even share dangerous lightning strikes.

Whether you're playing Deathmatch or Hunters, the large central structure is where most of the action is. Either embroil yourself in the action in or around the central structure, or hang around in the cliffs surrounding it, sniping at those below you and at other would-be snipers.

All of the inventory stations are inside the central structure, so if you want to pursue a strategy that requires specific gear, you'll need to go inside. A few scattered items are outside—like an energy pack on a small tower to the south and some mines on a platform to the north—but by and large you should stock up at inventory stations.

In Hunters, the nexus is outside, atop the central structure. This encourages you to play outside, where you can swoop in to cash in your flags at a moment's notice.

Games: Deathmatch, Hunters

Features: Massive central structure, a few scattered items

Terrain: Mountainous, large indoor areas

Climate: Slightly foggy, with massive lightning strikes

Gauntlet
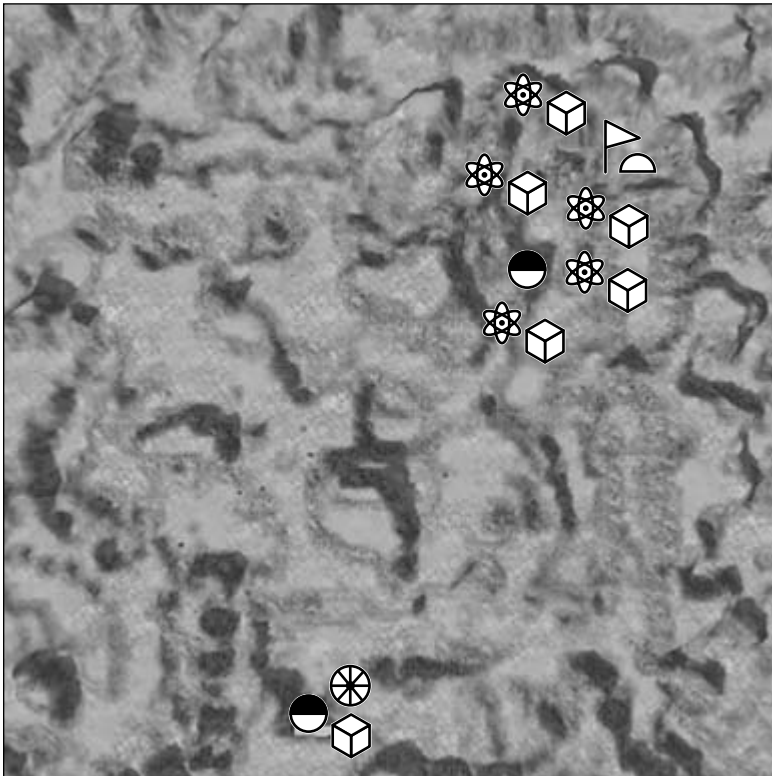
Game: Siege

Features: Base with two different entrance methods

Terrain: Hilly, mesas

Climate: Temperate, good visibility

Gauntlet places the defenders in charge of a multi-part base. To the south are four towers, each with an inventory station and a generator. The four generators power a force field guarding the front door of the underground flag bunker.

The flag bunker has two entrances. First is the aforementioned front door, which only opens up when all four generators have been taken down. Second, there's a higher entrance that's unguarded by force fields. Attackers can drop down a shaft, into an empty room, then jet up from there into the main complex.

When attacking, commit most of your team to one attack method or the other. Either attack the towers in force, thus opening the front door, or send lots of players to the vertical shaft and try to squeeze someone through. A couple of players can try the entrance you aren't concentrating on, either to draw off defenders from your real task or to sneak through while they're not looking.

When defending, your first priority should be the shaft. Mine it thoroughly and place spider-clamp turrets and sensors in the room at the bottom. Make sure a few teammates are there at all times. The rest of the team can then focus on guarding the four towers and repairing damaged generators.

Gehenna
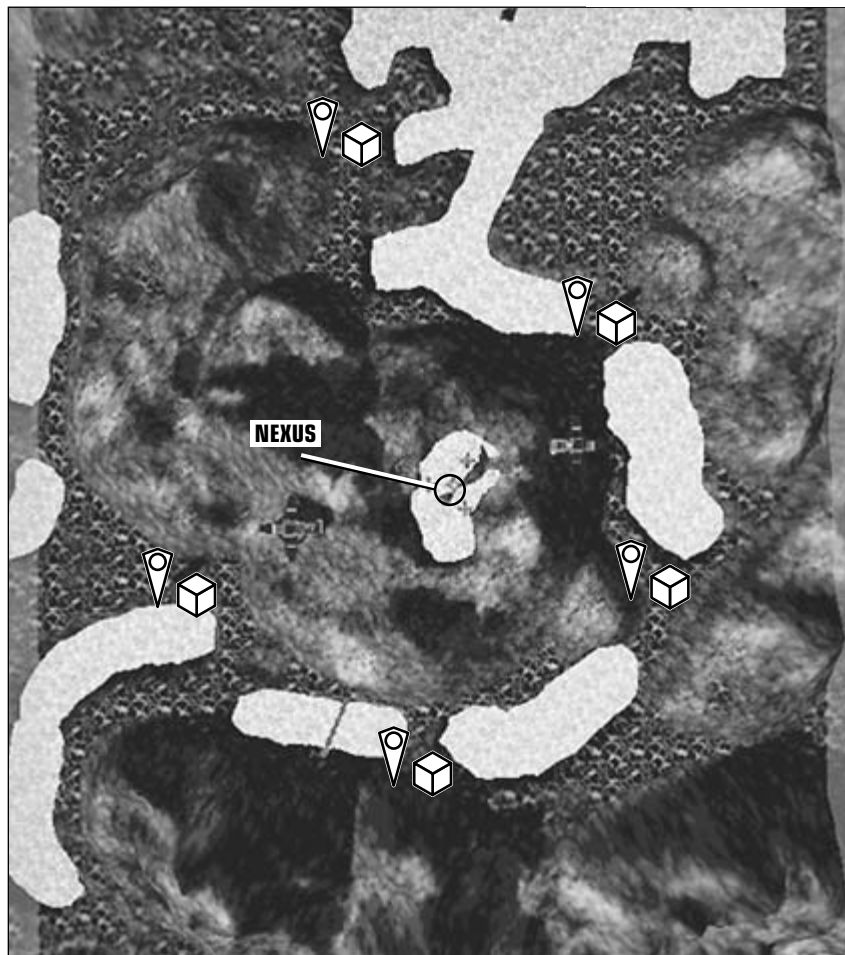
NEXUS

There isn't much to distinguish this map except for the lava pools, which you should obviously avoid, and the fact that the nexus floats high above one of these pools. A few floating platforms lead up to it.

CAUTION

Be particularly careful when running to cash in flags; you're vulnerable as you jump on these floating stepping-stones, and if you get knocked off, the lava can kill instantly.

Games: Hunters, Team Hunters

Features: Five inventory towers

Terrain: Volcanic crags

Climate: Overcast, frequent lightning strikes, good visibility

This Hunters map features five small towers with inventory stations and two large towers without any facilities whatsoever. The large towers do, however, have a pack or two and healing supplies.

TIP

Lightning periodically slams into the ground. If you suddenly lose a chunk of health and have no idea what happened, lightning is often the culprit.

The lighter armor types are better because there are no indoor areas in this mission.

Icebound

Game: Siege
Features: Power base and control base
Terrain: Mountainous with flat valleys
Climate: Arctic, good visibility
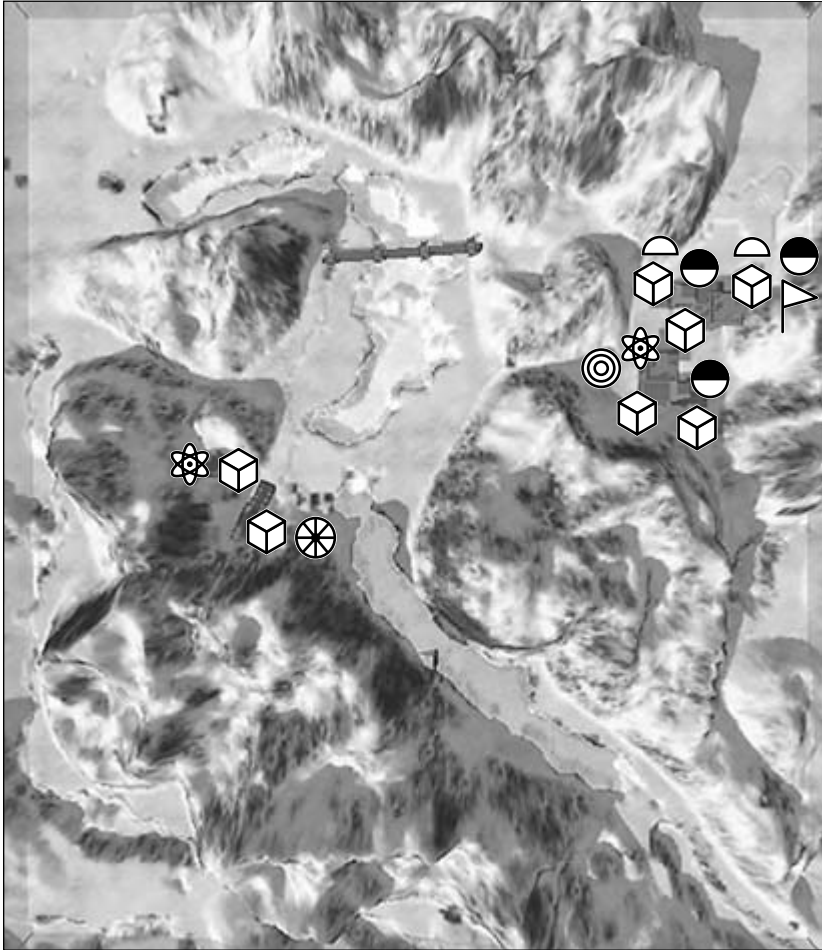
This Siege mission features a base divided into two structures. The northern structure is the control base, and the southern structure is the power base. These two structures are almost identical.

The attackers have a small base to the west, complete with inventory and vehicle stations.

As the mission starts, some entrances to the control base are sealed with force fields, and the flag itself is completely protected. Thus, as the attacker, your first order of business is to attack the power base.

Both bases have two entrances, an upper and lower. The lower is defended by a plasma turret. Enter the power base (ideally by using the upper entrance, but you may have to attack both). Go down as far as possible to find two generators. Destroy both, and all turrets and force fields shut down.

Now turn your attention to the power base. You can enter the power base through either the upper or lower entrance. Either way, go as far down as you can. The control switch is on the lowest level.

As a defender, protect the power base first and foremost. Don't bother defending the control base until the generators go down. When that happens, fall back into the control base and hold out as long as you can.

Insalubria

Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Four towers, two bases

Terrain: High but rounded hills

Climate: Temperate, fair weather

Insalubria is a Capture & Hold mission featuring both bases and towers. The bases serve as a staging point on the towers, which are the real point-getters.

The bases possess both inventory and vehicle stations, and three turrets apiece. Each color-coded tower contains inventory stations and turrets.

The towers are clustered fairly close together. This, coupled with the serious firepower possessed by each, ensures a frantic fight. Grab and hold as many towers as possible, and defend them for as

long as possible. Engage the enemy before he or she gets to the tower, so the turrets have a chance to do their work.

> **TIP**
>
> Depending on what sort of attack you're facing, you may wish to change the turret barrels on various turrets.

Staging an attack on the enemy base will disrupt vehicle production—but since the towers all have inventory stations, disabling the enemy base isn't as useful as in some other missions (like Firestorm).

Invictus
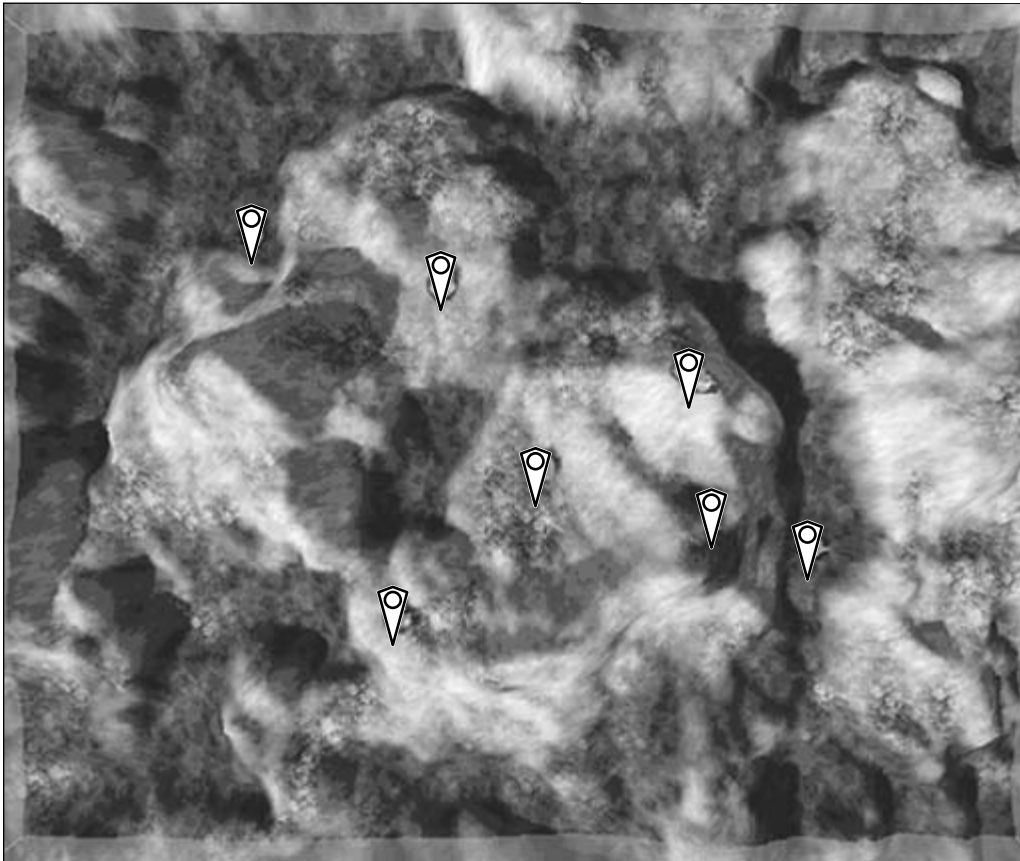
Game: Deathmatch

Features: Seven weapons bunkers, no inventory stations

Terrain: Very mountainous

Climate: Rainy, very foggy

This Deathmatch map has no inventory stations. Instead, gear is collected from a series of bunkers scattered across the area.

Heavy fog and rain make it easy to lose yourself in this map, despite its fairly compact size. We recommend grabbing a good weapon, a pack if possible, and then disappearing into the mist.

If you set yourself on a mountaintop, you can get above the fog and see down into the valleys somewhat: This is ideal for sniping or using the grenade launcher.

Here are tips on where to find some of the best gear:

◆ The northwest bunker has an ammunition pack.

◆ The bunker just east of that has a plasma rifle.

◆ The easternmost bunker has a satchel charge—great for cheap kills!

◆ The bunker just west of that has the sniper rifle.

◆ The central bunker holds an assortment of packs.

Jacob's Ladder
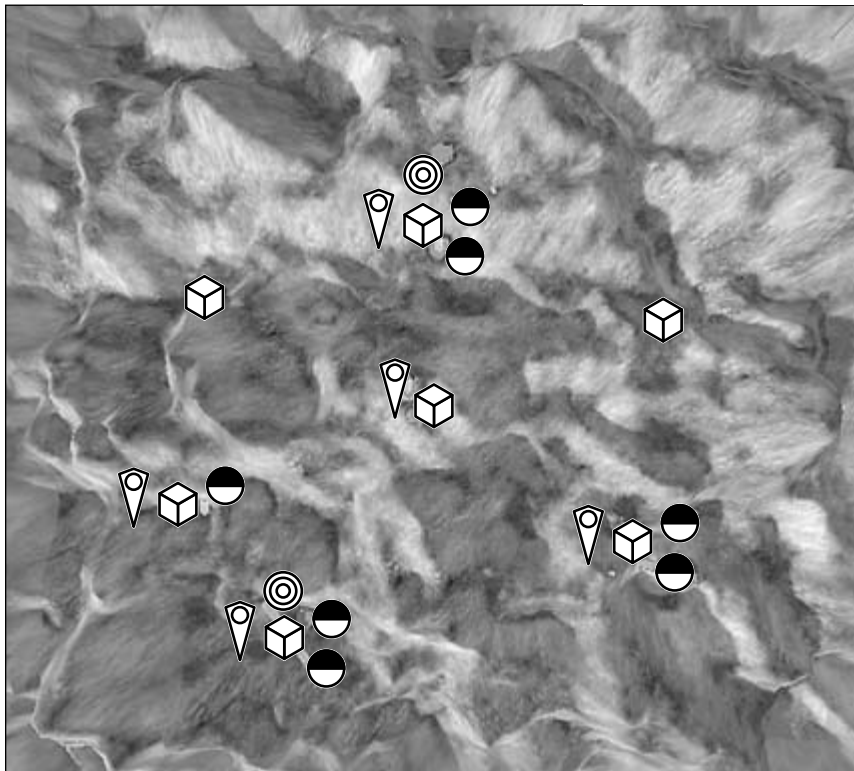
Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Five towers, two supply stations

Terrain: Very mountainous

Climate: Temperate, average visibility

This Capture & Hold map features five towers to capture. Each team starts out with a small bunker containing inventory stations; these don't give any points, and they are merely a convenience.

The center tower is the largest and sits on the highest ground. This helps its defensibility, and from here you can lob grenades and mortar shells down on all four other towers.

None of the towers is particularly easy to defend, as most of the control points are in the open. Also, the four peripheral bases are spread out—meaning that the flag isn't in the same structure as the

turrets, sensor array, and inventory stations. Instead, they're scattered across a small area.

Get control of the center tower, and then use that as a base to attack the nearby northern tower, plus one other. Taking out the enemy's inventory stations can be mildly effective, but not devastating.

TIP

The steep terrain makes skiing difficult, but despite being very vertical, the terrain is still somewhat rounded. In other words, you can ski—it's just difficult.

Katabatic
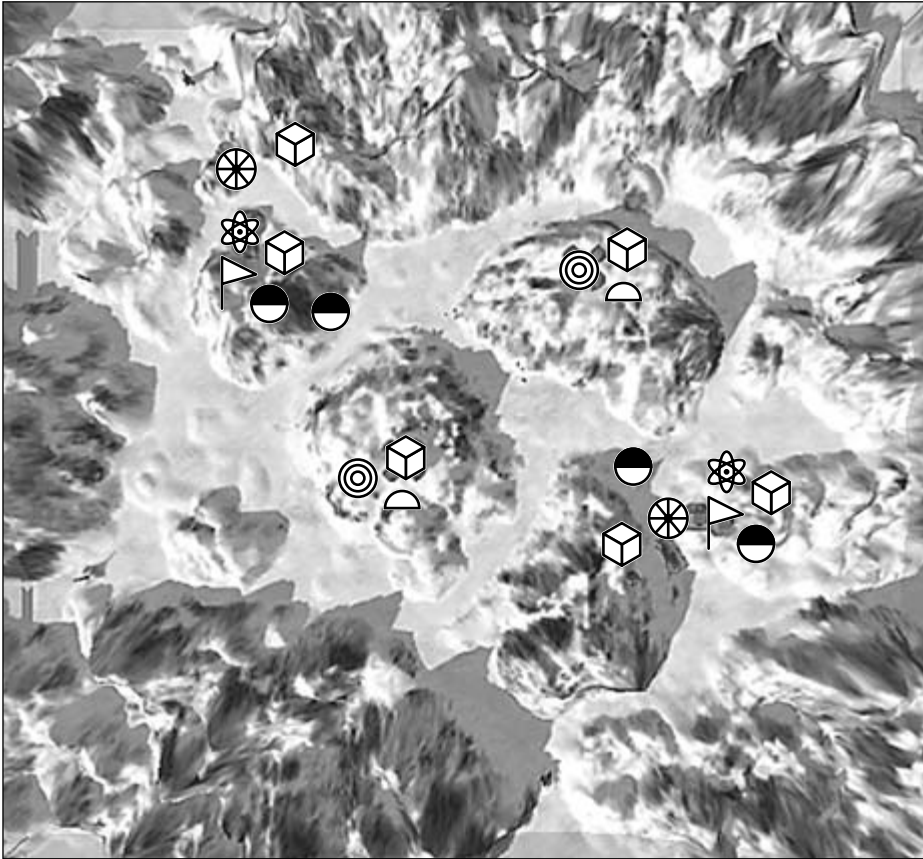
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Large decentralized flag bases, outlying towers

Terrain: Steep mountains, flat valleys

Climate: Arctic, slightly foggy

This mission gives each team a couple of bases. The main flag base has almost every amenity, but it's large and sprawling, so it takes time to get around. In addition, its flag is actually outside, in between the two large aboveground structures (over the underground portion) that make up the flag base. Be careful not to waste too much time in the big underground base—get your equipment and get outside quickly.

You can use vehicles in this mission, though there's enough rough terrain for a flag runner to flee on foot, especially if he's got Scout armor and an energy pack.

The sensor bases are separate from the main defenses, and are thus vulnerable to a dedicated attack. Taking down the enemy sensor array can give you a distinct advantage. Defend your own sensor array, and place turrets around the exterior of your main base. It's far too big to defend efficiently once the enemy is inside; your best hope is to keep them out of it to begin with.

MASADA

Game: Siege
Features: Small, difficult-to-defend base
Terrain: Tall mesas
Climate: Dry, dark (poor visibility)
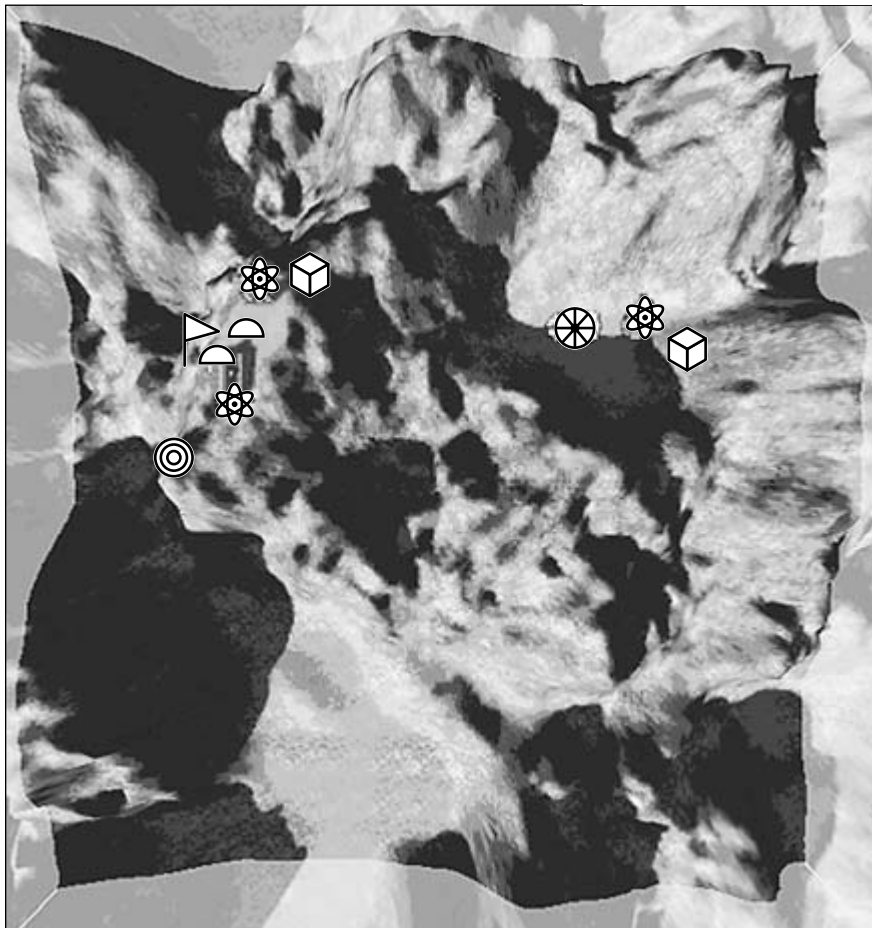
Masada places the defenders in control of a base atop a mesa. The base is split into two structures. The northern structure has a single inventory station, while the southern structure has the control switch and no inventory stations.

The attackers are better equipped, with several inventory stations and a vehicle station. (Vehicles are essential to getting heavier armors up the hill quickly.)

The control switch is in the basement of the southern building, protected by a force field. To take down the force field, disable the generators in both the northern and southern buildings.

As an attacker, hit both buildings simultaneously or one right after the other. Take out the northern building first, and destroy the enemy's lone inventory station. That'll slow them down while you enter the southern building and take out the generators there.

As a defender, lay down quick automated defenses in the southern building, meanwhile massing most of your team at the northern one. Protect both the inventory station and the generator there, and you'll do just fine.

Minotaur

Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two large flag bases, two inventory bunkers

Terrain: Craggy, large indoor areas

Climate: Hazy, frequent lightning strikes

This CTF mission features bases stuck close together, ensuring fast and furious action. Each team's inventory stations are secured in separate bunkers by force fields, so attacking them is useless. Instead, flood the enemy base, get the flag, and get out quickly.

The flag is in a vertical shaft, which is guarded by two sentry turrets. Taking out these turrets, even by suicidal methods, is advantageous. This clears the way for a fast flag grab. You can also use an active jammer pack to stymie turrets when making a flag run.

Speed attacks, by warriors in Scout armor using energy packs, are a vital tactic in this mission. Mines on the flag can also disrupt the smooth flow of a quick flag grab.

Ultimately, this map will test your combat and teamwork skills. Attack in a large group, with several group members distracting the enemy while one grabs the flag, and you'll do well.

MYRKWOOD
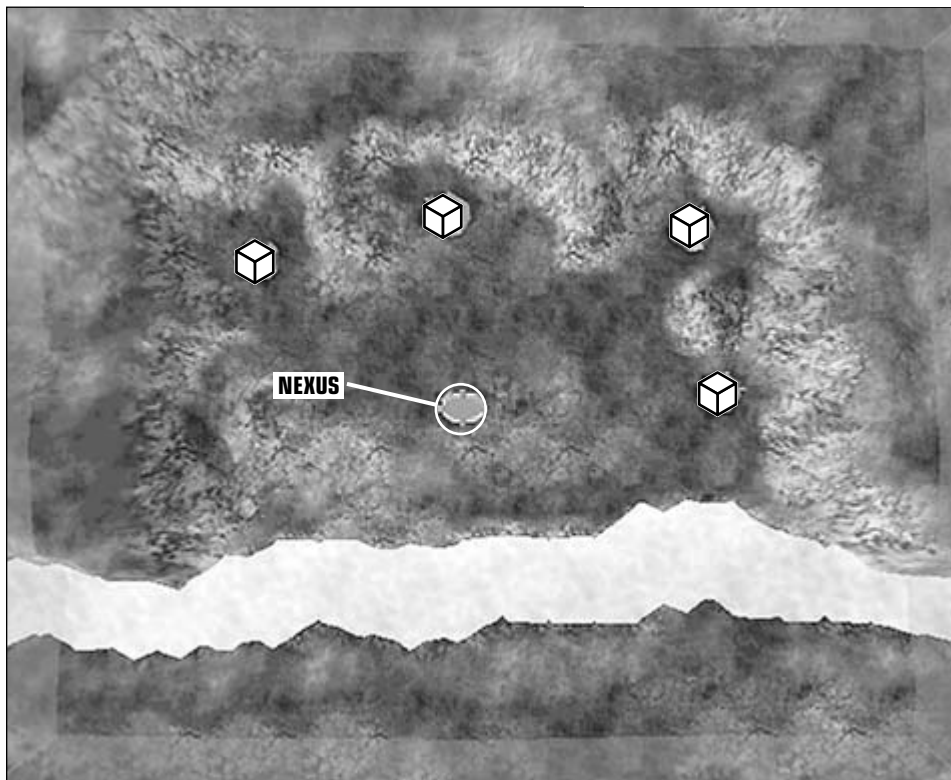
NEXUS

Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Rabbit

Features: Four inventory bunkers, nexus bunker

Terrain: Mostly flat forest, some tall hills

Climate: Extremely dark and foggy, poor visibility

Myrkwood has the worst visibility of any map you'll encounter. It's so dim and foggy that you won't see much beyond a few feet. That makes it extremely easy to lose bearings, even though this is a fairly small map.

There are four bunkers with inventory stations, and one bunker is either empty or contains a nexus, depending on the game type.

The map contains lots of trees, several sharp hills that rise abruptly from the forest floor, and a stream through the southern edge of the map. Using the hills for cover is key to success in Rabbit, as well as a good way to stay partially hidden in other game types.

The name of the game here is awareness. Do your best to stay alert to what's around you, and keep moving. Don't linger long in the bunkers: It's easy for other players to locate and attack you while you're in there.

The laser rifle is practically useless here, thanks to the poor visibility. Stick with blast weapons like the spinfusor.

> ### TIP
> Be careful not to fire when there's no need to, because your weapon's blast gives your position away.

Oasis
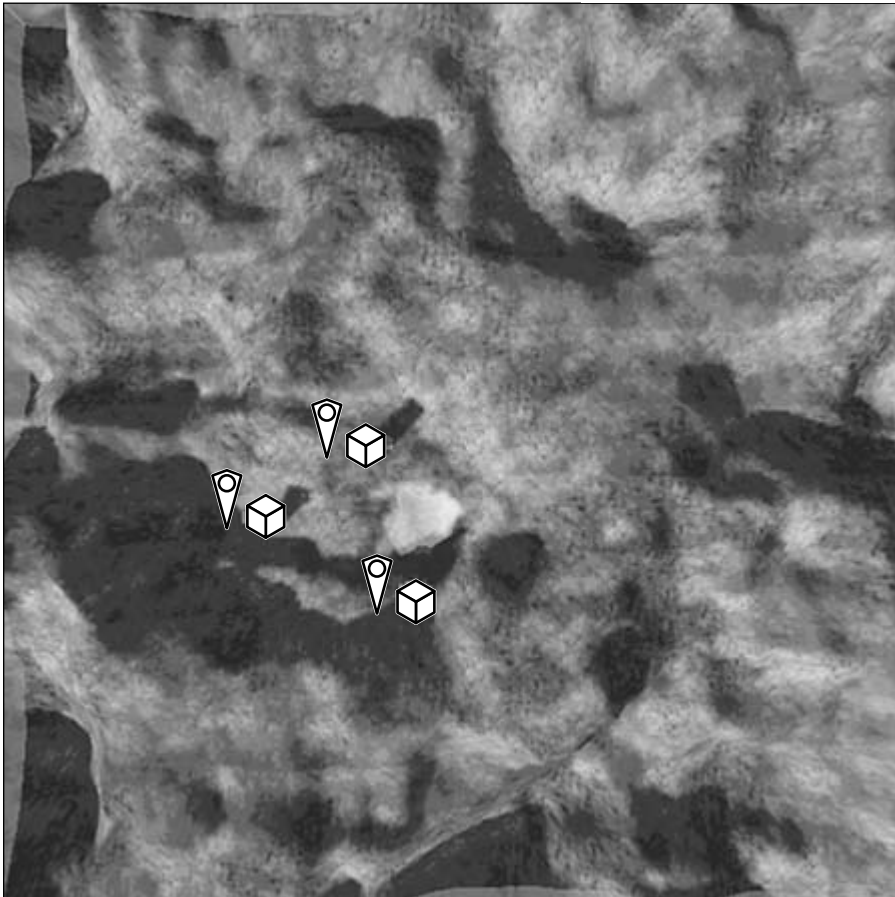
Game: Deathmatch

Features: Three towers around an oasis

Terrain: Tall hills, desert

Climate: Clear, good visibility

This Deathmatch map takes place in a desert. As the name suggests, the focus of the map is an oasis in the center, which contains three towers. Each of the three towers has inventory stations.

The oasis itself is somewhat sunken, making those inside it vulnerable to sniping from the hills around it. However, since the only inventory stations are inside the towers, and there's no worthwhile gear anywhere else, it's a foregone conclusion that the towers are popular spots.

Killing foes as they enter and leave towers is a popular diversion on this map, as is lobbing grenades or other explosives inside a tower to catch those who are busy stocking up.

If you prefer one-on-one combat, gravitate toward the edge of the map and try to lure opponents out into the hills.

Overreach
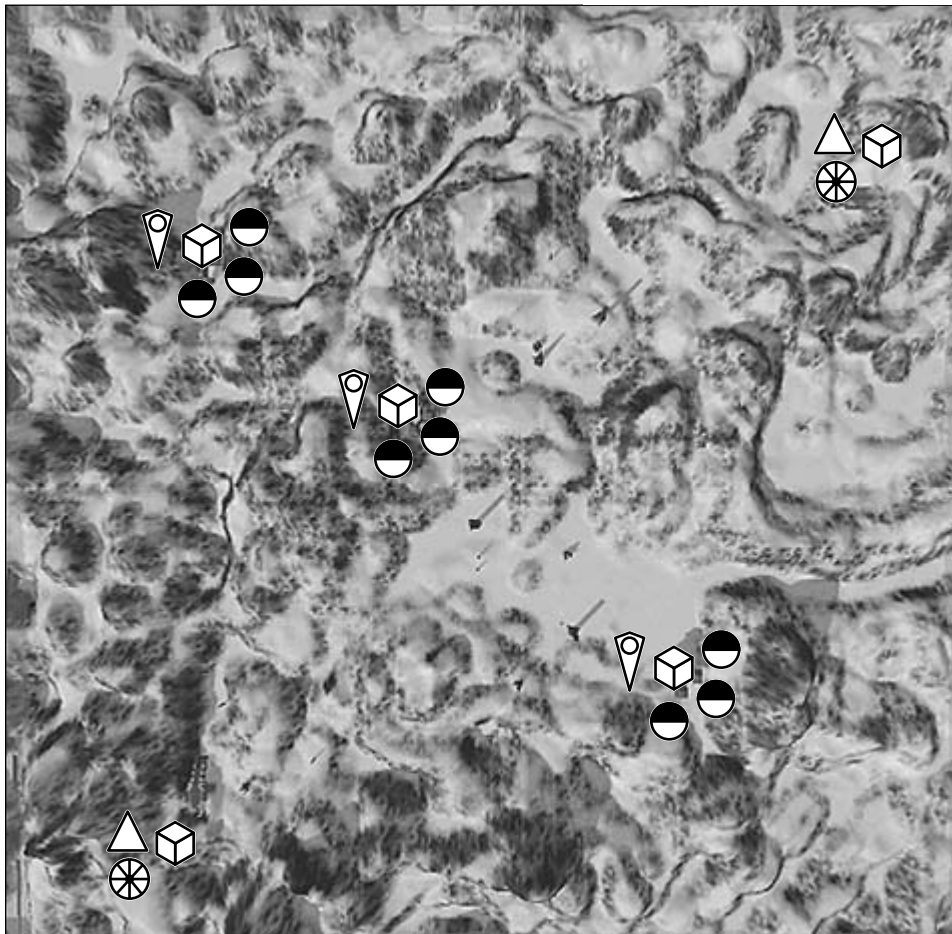
Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Three towers (keeps), two bases

Terrain: Low mountains

Climate: Arctic, good visibility

Overreach is another Capture & Hold mission that gives each side a starting base. The opposing sides fight over three identical keeps.

Both teams' bases have vehicle stations as well as inventory stations. Destroying the enemy base is useful in this mission, as it deprives them of vehicles and readily available weapons.

The two northern bases are closer to one another than to the third, but the third is separated by a valley, which is faster to cross than mountains. Ultimately, you can grab any two keeps you'd like.

Pyroclasm
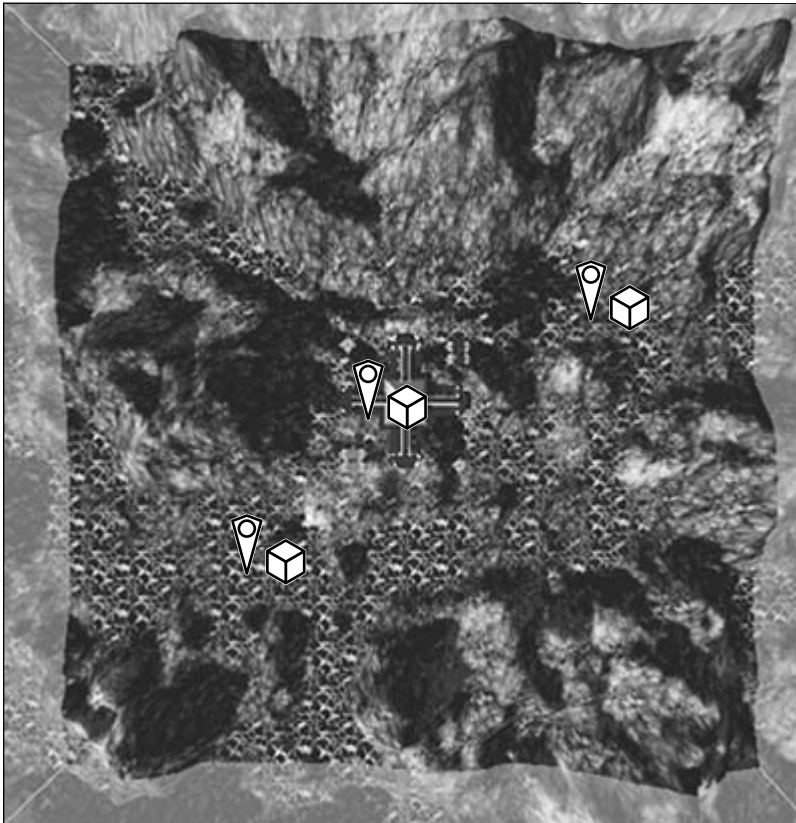
Game: Deathmatch

Features: Three towers (central tower floating)

Terrain: Volcanic, mountainous

Climate: Clear, good visibility

This Deathmatch-only map features an interesting configuration. There are two small, land-based towers plus a central floating pyramid tower; each provides inventory stations. Four floating platforms at various heights surround the pyramid; without them, it'd be nearly impossible to get up to it.

It's important to note that you don't HAVE to go to the central pyramid. In fact, unless you're quite good at maneuvering, it's not recommended. You can't get anything in the pyramid that you can't get on the ground, and unless you're a great jump-jetter, you'll be extremely vulnerable to snipers as you maneuver on those intermediate floating platforms. Instead, you can stay on the ground, get your equipment there, and slug it out as you see fit—or snipe at others trying to reach the central tower.

If you decide to go after the central tower, visit a peripheral tower first for an energy pack.

The platforms themselves have a few packs and weapons on them, but they have little tactical significance since you can get the same stuff on the ground. Also you shouldn't abandon your energy pack until you're on the pyramid itself, so the packs on the platforms are useless.

If you make it to the pyramid, you can capitalize by running around atop it and blasting anyone trying to jump up and join you. Optionally, you can also switch to heavier armor and hang around inside, picking off others who try to reach the inventory stations.

QUAGMIRE
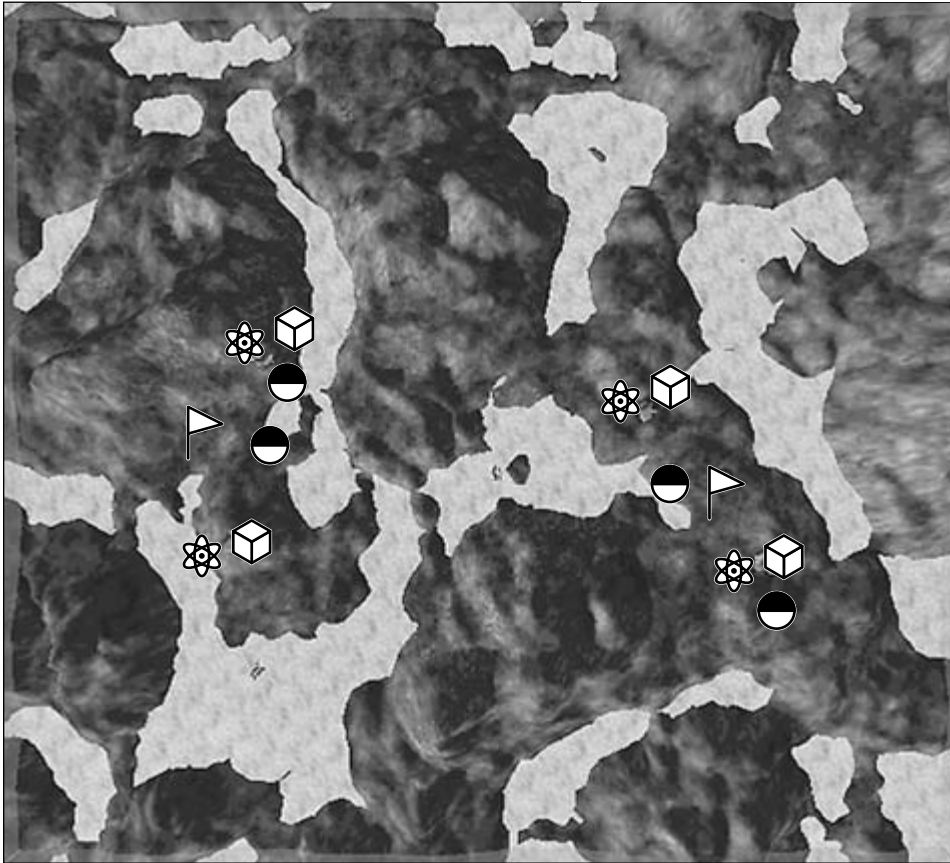
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two flag bases

Terrain: Medium-sized mountains, lots of water

Climate: Foggy, raining, low visibility

This CTF map features limited visibility and no sensor arrays—a recipe for confusion! Deploy a few sensors early on, so your team can see what's going on.

The flags in this mission aren't very well defended—they're in small bunkers, separate from the towers containing inventory stations and turrets—so they need full-time guards and several hand-placed turrets.

Thanks to the limited visibility in this mission, stealth raids are extremely potent. Sneak in and grab the flag while the enemy is distracted, and escape via fast skiing on the mountains, or a quick plunge in the water.

NOTE

The ruined tower in the center of the map is interesting to look at, but it has no real tactical significance.

Rasp
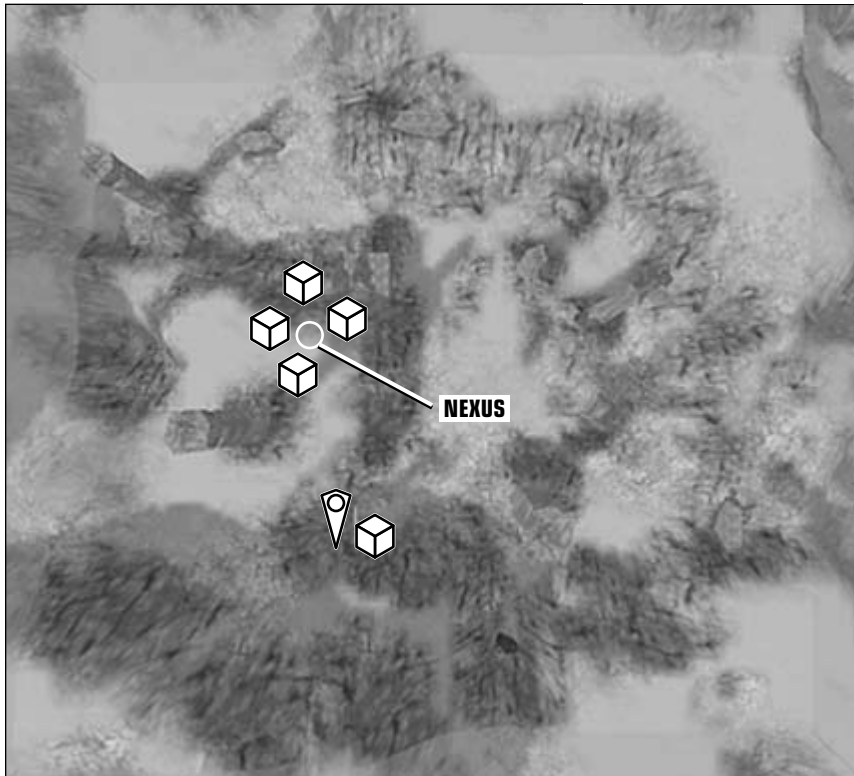
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Bounty

Features: Large underground base

Terrain: Mountainous, large indoor area

Climate: Hot, good visibility

Rasp is one of a few maps that we STRONGLY recommend playing on your own before playing with others. It features a massive multilevel indoor area that will only confuse you if you don't take some time to explore it. It has too many levels and sublevels to be understood easily from a two-dimensional map. The only answer is to spend some time in it and get a feel for where everything is.

A single outdoor bunker holds an inventory station. Use it if you're shaky on where things are indoors, and go inside AFTER gearing up.

A small gazebo east of the central building contains health items.

In Hunters games, the nexus is near the front entrance but not exactly on the same level; it's near the middle of the building.

Making matters more complex, most of the inventory stations are hidden inside the building. Confused? One inventory station is ABOVE the nexus. Look up when you're standing in the central area with a view of the nexus, and you'll see a small balcony above it. Fly up there to get to the inventory station.

Another inventory station is reached by going to the bottom of the building, then locating an elevator shaft off in a corner. It leads to a secret room with another inventory station.

Go ahead and explore the level on your own. It'll pay off when you play against real opposition.

Recalescence
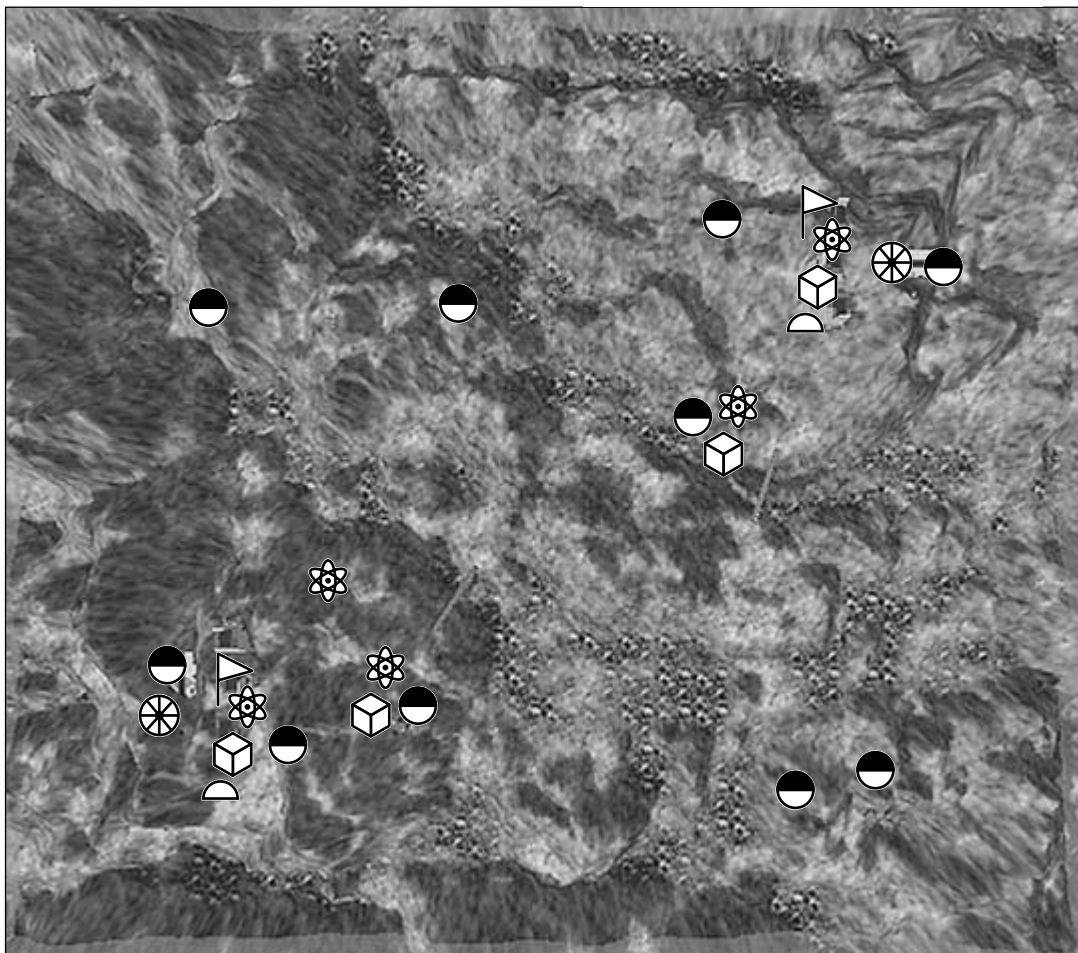
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Multiple turrets, big underground bases

Terrain: Volcanic, craggy

Climate: Average visibility, frequent meteor strikes

This huge map features tons of defenses, big underground bases, and numerous outlying structures. Use vehicles to cross the map. Still, the size of the map and each team's base can be slightly exhausting.

Play alone on this map for a while before trying it with others. It's too big and complicated (particularly the main base interiors) to figure much out in a real combat situation.

Otherwise, this is a typical CTF map. It's big and spread out, so you'll have to lay down lots of sensors and turrets to take care of business when your teammates aren't around. Make sure someone is constantly laying down infrastructure and repairing broken items.

Respite
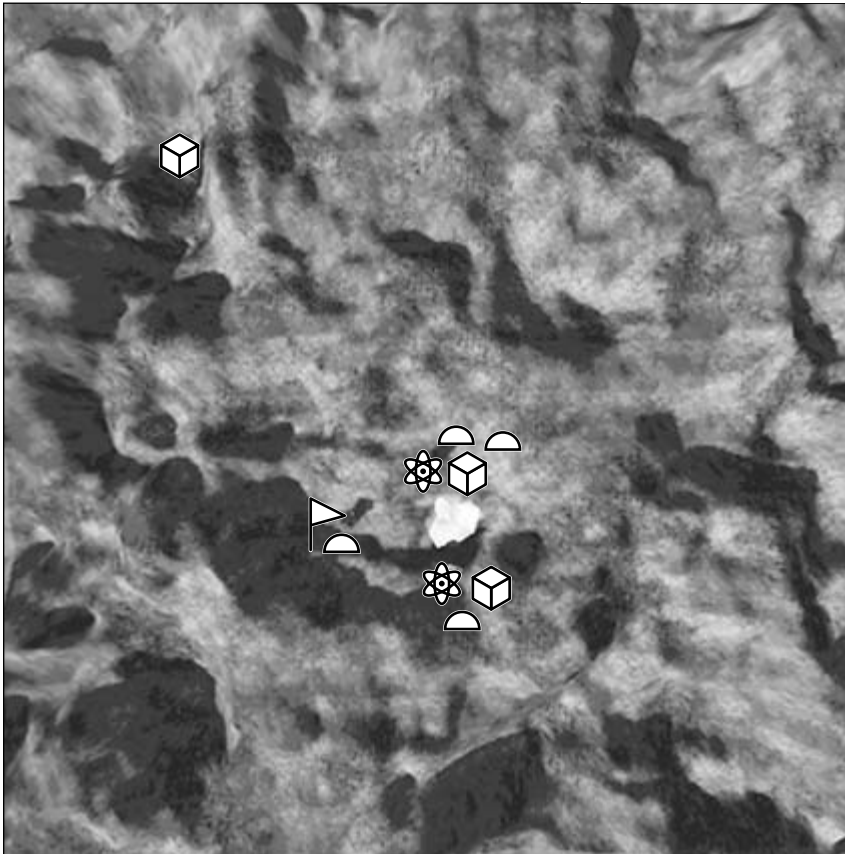
Game: Siege

Features: Three towers

Terrain: Mountainous

Climate: Temperate, minor valley fog, average visibility

Respite places the defenders in charge of three towers. The northern and southern towers have generators, and the western one harbors the control switch. Both the northern and southern generators must be taken down to disable a force field guarding the control switch.

As the attacker, assault the northern and southern towers first. The northern tower is best attacked from the highest entry point, while the southern tower must be entered from ground level. Blast lots of grenades and/or fusion mortar shells into the towers first to take out those sentry turrets—or else sneak past them with a sensor jammer pack and take out the generators before you get killed.

When both generators are down, head for the western tower. Again, you'll need to take out the sentry turret guarding it, use a sensor jammer pack, or bull through with heavy armor.

As a defender, lay down extra turrets around the three towers, along with various sensors. Engage the enemy before they enter the towers, and continually repair damaged sentry turrets. You can also mine the areas near the generators.

REVERSION
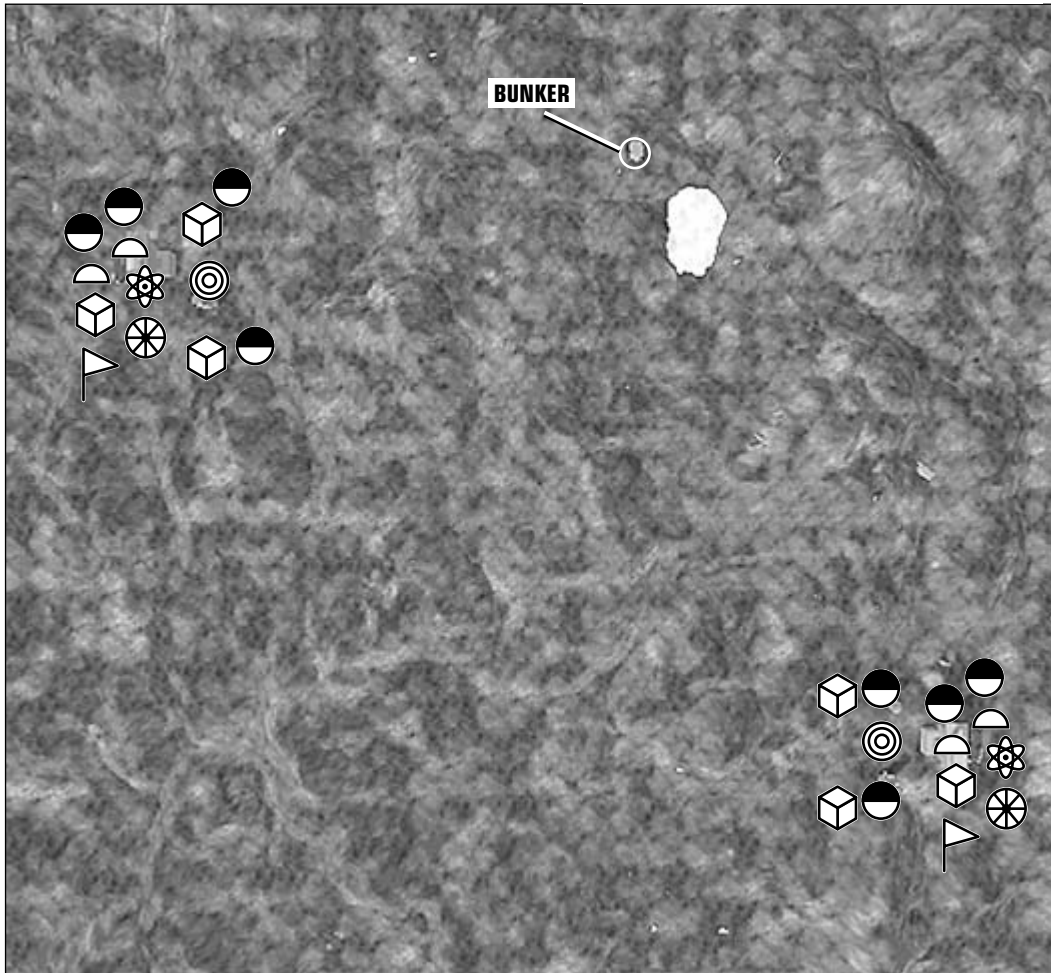
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two compact flag bases

Terrain: Low hills, lake to the northeast

Climate: Foggy, relatively low visibility

This large CTF map features two compact bases, each consisting of a pair of towers and a large main base. This design, coupled with several turrets, makes the bases fairly easy to defend. The only problem is that the flags are open to the air, located near the top of the main structures instead of hidden deep within them.

This is a very straightforward map. The bases are simply designed and there's a lot of open space between them, with no truly remarkable terrain features. Use vehicles to cross the wide intermediate space.

A small neutral bunker in the north contains healing items, but it's enough out of the way that it will seldom come into play.

Rimehold

ENTRANCE   NEXUS   ENTRANCE
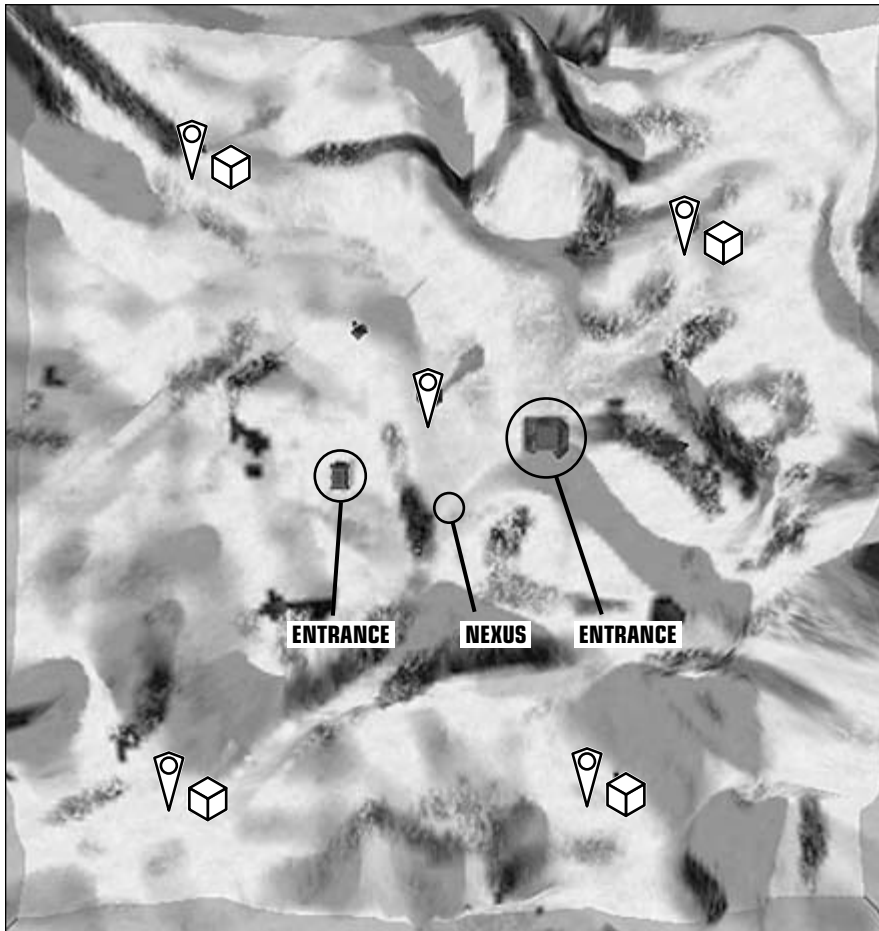
Games: Hunters, Team Hunters

Features: Four inventory towers

Terrain: Low mountains

Climate: Arctic, snowing, good visibility

This Hunters map features inventory stations in towers at the map's four corners. A fifth tower at the center of the map is empty.

The nexus is underground with two bunkers providing entrances to its subterranean complex.

Since there's quite a large area underground with no inventory stations, gain an advantage by suiting up in Assault or Juggernaut armor, with lots of heavy weapons and perhaps an ammunition pack (complete with spare repair kit).

CAUTION

If you stay topside, watch for snipers and long-range attacks, which are promoted by the relatively level terrain and good visibility.

Riverdance
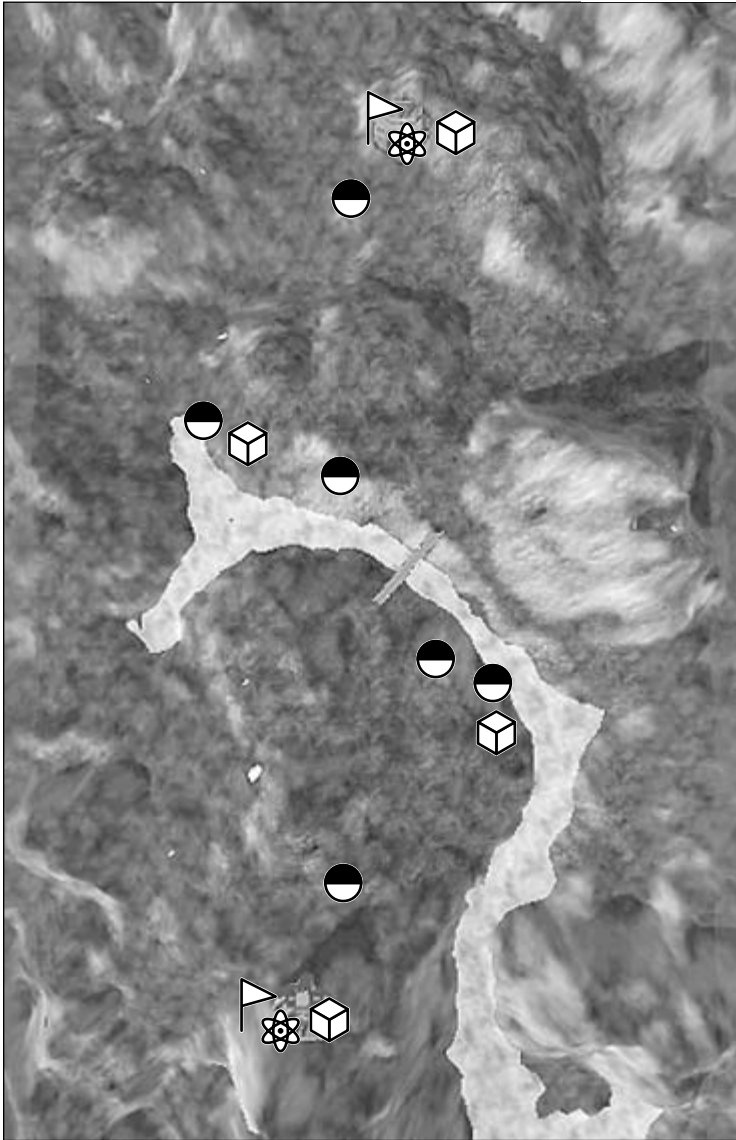
Riverdance is a long, narrow CTF map. Each side has a flag base protected by plasma turrets, plus a small tower by the central riverside, equipped with its own turrets and a lone inventory station.

The map is narrow, so the action is focused into a narrow corridor. Taking out the enemy turrets is crucial, since there are so many of them.

The flag bases have turrets nearby, but the flags themselves are on high balconies, which can be jumped to from the outside. This makes speedy flag runs a viable tactic, especially if you have an energy pack. Defending your own flag with mines can help take the air out of enemy flag runners' sails.

All in all, this is a typical CTF map. Speed, stealth, and group attacks are all viable methods for capturing the enemy flag.

Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two flag bases, outlying towers and turrets

Terrain: High hills, good skiing, prominent river

Climate: Rainy, wet, average visibility

Sanctuary
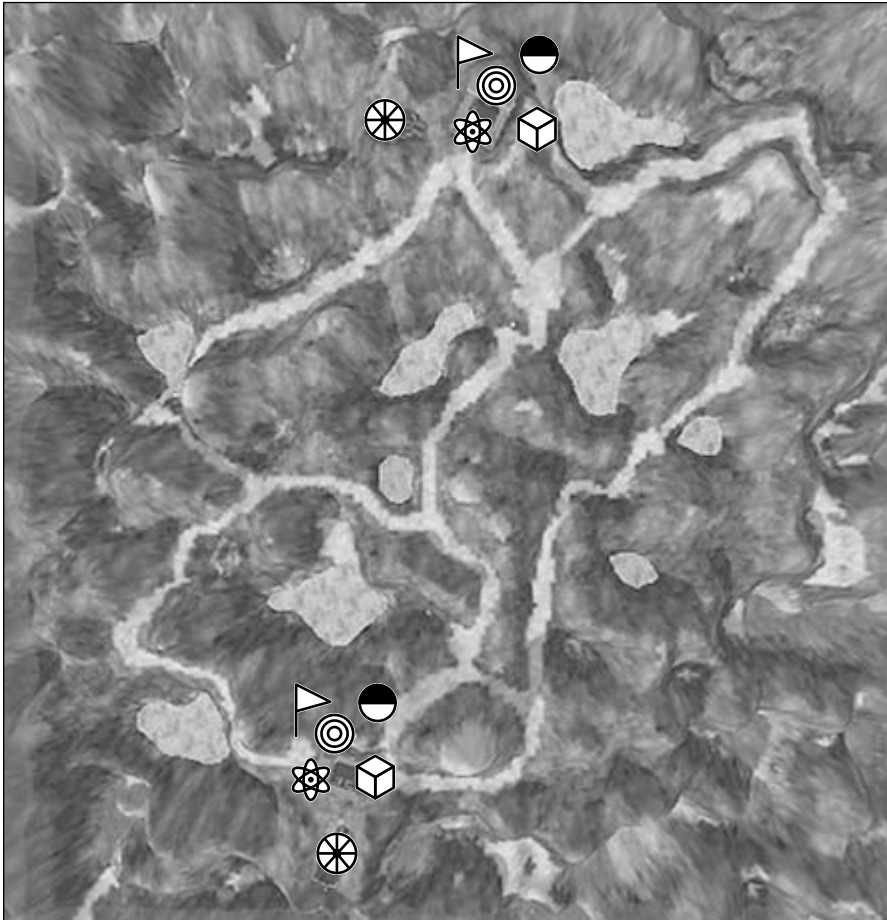
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two villa-style flag bases

Terrain: Tall mountains, deep valleys, multiple small lakes

Climate: Temperate, dimly lit, slightly foggy

Sanctuary places each team in charge of a villa-style base, meaning that it's a long, low building with a square courtyard in the center. The flag is in the courtyard, making it vulnerable to grab-and-run tactics.

There's only one turret per side. That, coupled with the easy-to-reach flag, provides a big incentive to use speed tactics—though powering your way inside the villa works just fine also.

Flying vehicles are a great way of dropping in on the enemy flag. Soften up the ground below you with grenades or fusion mortar fire before descending, then take the flag and fly away.

Repair packs lie scattered around the map. They can be mildly useful, but they're no substitute for your base's inventory stations.

The extremely vertical terrain favors Scout armor and energy packs, or heavier armor types in flying vehicles. Don't run across the map in heavy armor.

SIROCCO
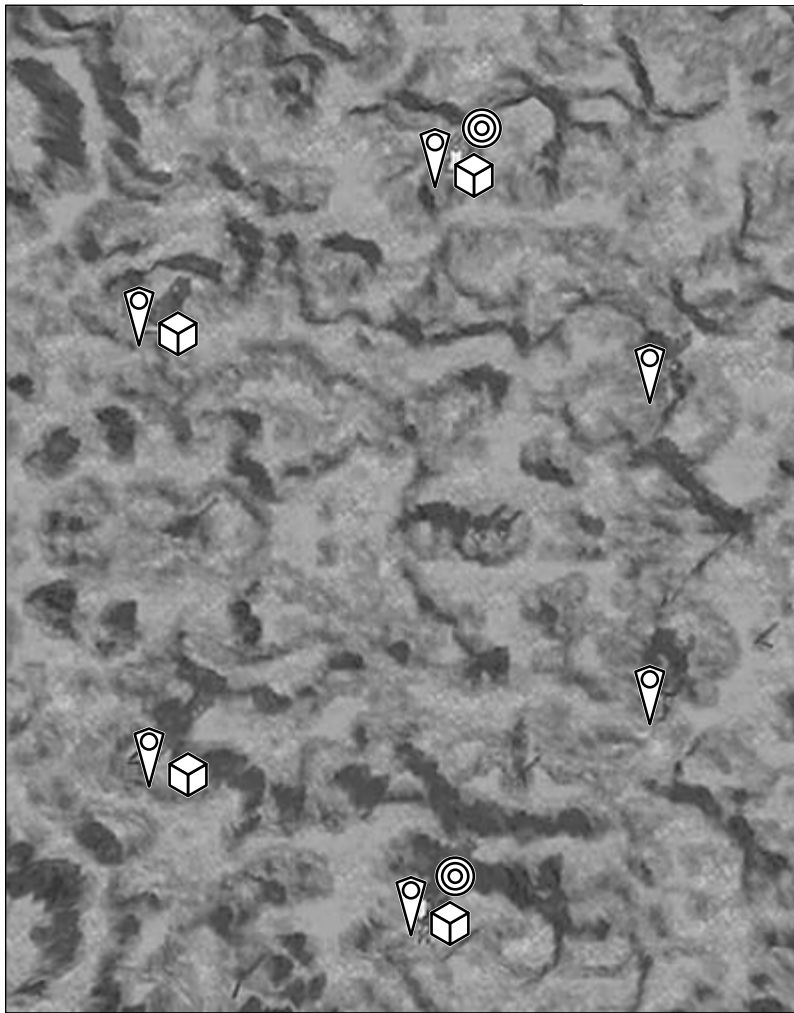
Sirocco is a Capture & Hold game with a mirrored map—both sides are identical.

Both teams start out close to three strongholds of various sizes, towers, and outposts in descending order of size. The two strongholds at the middle of the map are largest, while the towers in the west are smaller and the outposts to the east have no facilities to speak of.

A typical game on this map will shape up as both sides claim their respective three buildings and then skirmish, mainly over the two outposts, which are small and have no facilities.

Instead, capture and hold the larger facilities because they're more easily defensible. Send a player or two to hop around the outposts and occasionally claim them, disrupting the enemy point flow, while you keep the bigger structures secure.

Game: Capture & Hold

Features: Six towers, mirrored (the map's top and bottom are mirror images of one another)

Terrain: Low, rocky desert

Climate: Hot, clear, good visibility

Slapdash
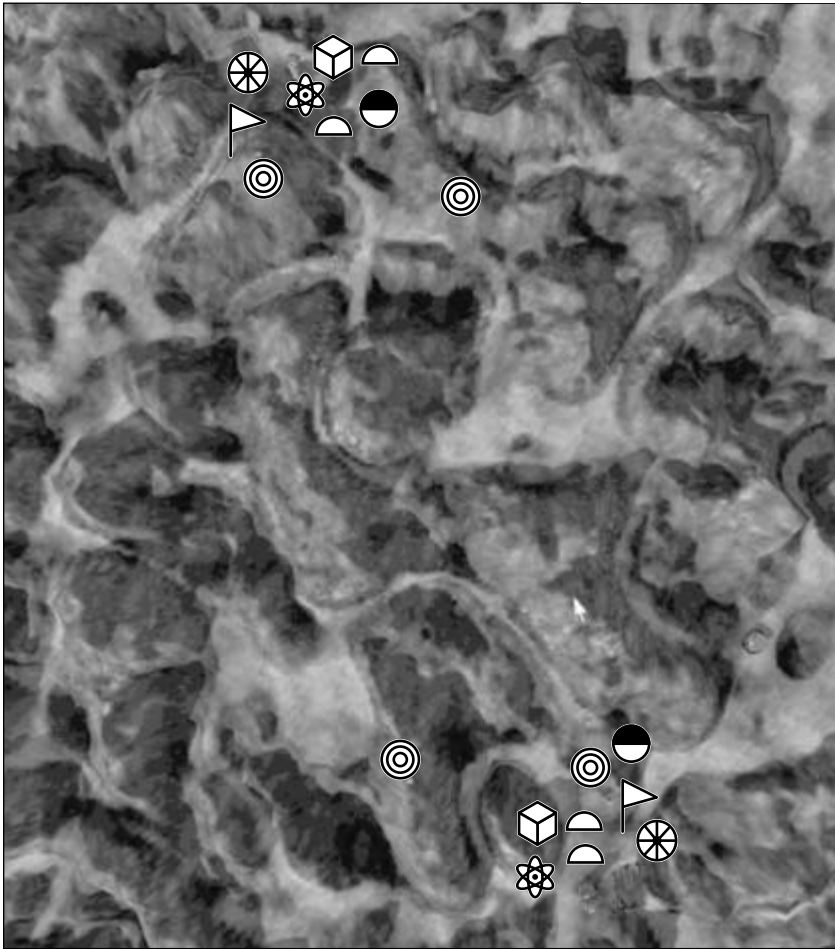
Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two flag bases, outlying turrets and sensors

Terrain: Hilly, winding roads

Climate: Temperate, good visibility

This is a large CTF map marked by high peaks and roads that wend their way to the enemy bases. The flag for each base is approximately 200 meters in front of it, forcing a team to bring the defense to the flag. Each team's base is anchored by a single tower and vehicle pad with a missile turret for support. Two sensor arrays monitor the area.

This map is designed with vehicles in mind. You may want to park a Jericho close to the flag to provide additional defense, and a Beowulf can provide invaluable artillery support for flag runs. Taking out the missile turret is essential for successful flag runs."

Sun Dried

NEXUS
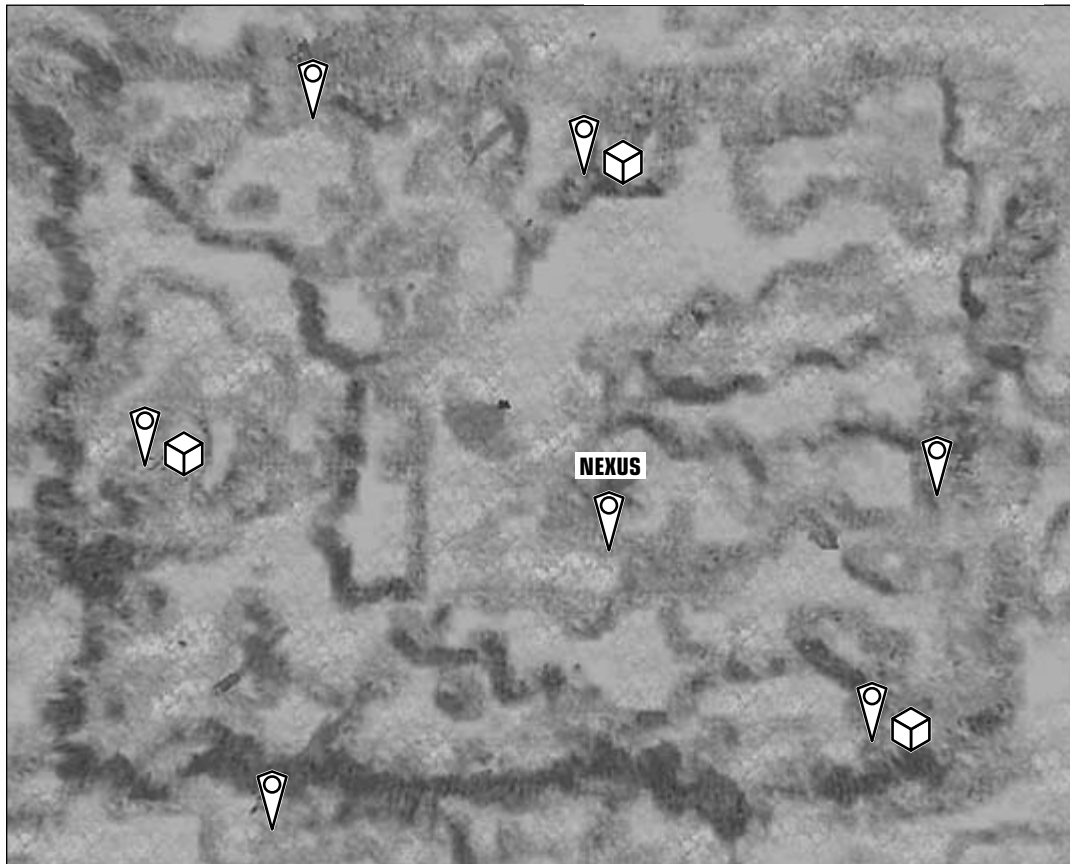
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Bounty, Rabbit

Features: Multiple towers, not all with inventory stations

Terrain: Desert, low mountains

Climate: Clear, good visibility

This multipurpose map can host all the non-team games. It's a wide expanse of craggy desert dotted with towers.

The most important thing is that only three of the towers have inventory stations. The rest have repair patches, but that's it. Make a mental note of where the towers with inventory stations are, because you'll need to visit them often.

Lighter armor types are ideal for this map because it's so wide open. There are no indoor areas, and the great visibility encourages long-range sniping. Stay mobile and stick close to the taller hill-sides, which give you some degree of cover.

Talus
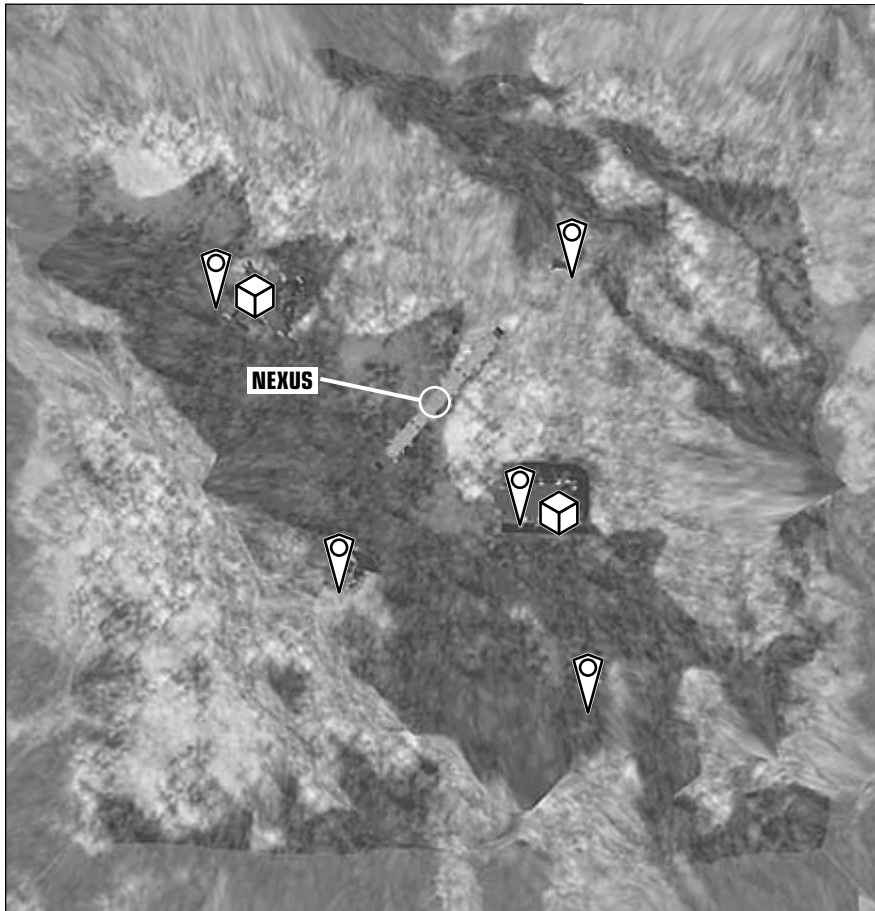
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Bounty

Features: Two large towers with inventory stations, smaller bunkers

Terrain: Mountainous

Climate: Temperate, slightly foggy

Talus is another multipurpose map. Like Sun Dried, it features several buildings, but not all of them contain inventory stations. Unlike Sun Dried, however, it's very easy to distinguish which structures have inventory stations in Talus: the two largest. One is more of a floating (above ground) tower, while the other has underground areas. Neither is huge, so you'll spend lots of time outdoors.

Three small bunkers contain health supplies (such as repair patches) but no inventory stations. Pop into these for a quick fix, then get out again. These small structures are dangerous, because they tend to catch and focus the explosions of weapons with a blast radius.

Again, since there isn't too much indoor area, use Scout or Assault armor. However, most armor types and strategies are feasible.

THIN ICE

Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Two flag bases, multiple vehicle stations

Terrain: Mountains, plains, and lakes

Climate: Arctic, good visibility
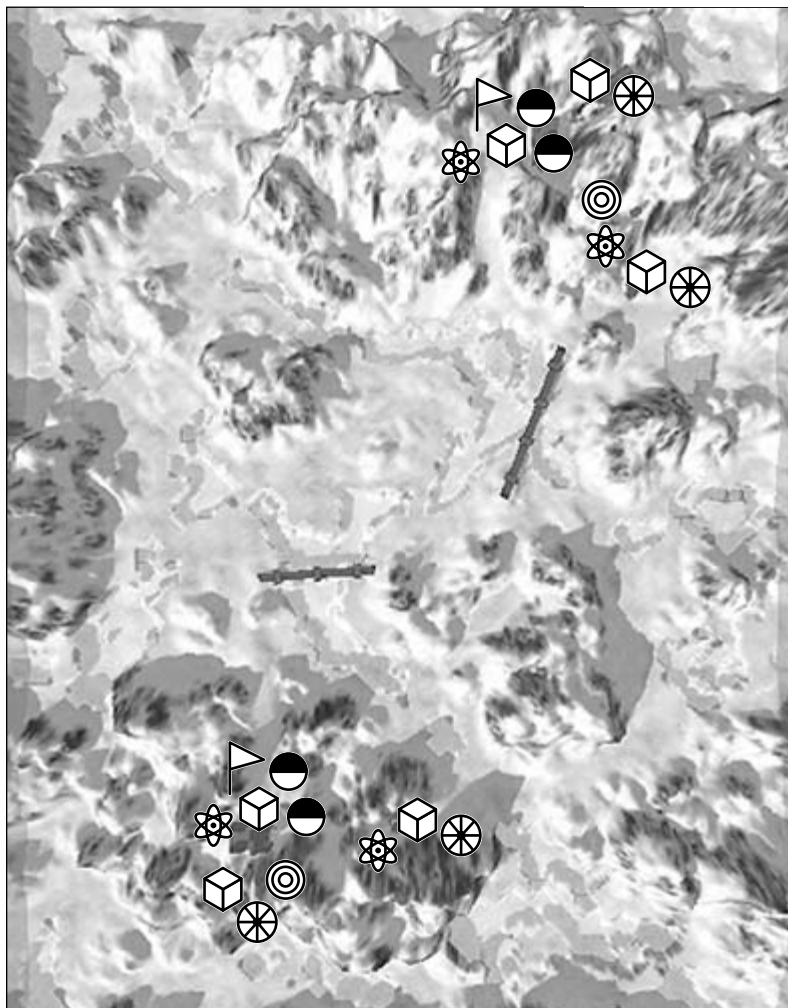
This large CTF map encourages vehicle use. It's big, the middle ground is flat (with little cover) and riddled with lakes, and each side starts with two vehicle stations.

The bases are sequestered in clusters of mountains. It's vital for you to have a good sensor network and to have defenders on mountaintops to intercept incoming foes.

Use vehicles to cross the map. Beware the two turrets guarding the enemy base, though—you may have to get out of your vehicle and take out the turrets before you can approach in the vehicle.

The flag bases have multiple openings, but only the front options are open when the mission starts. The side and rear openings are blocked by force fields, powered by an internal generator. So concentrate your defenses at the front of the flag base.

When you get inside the enemy flag base, don't just snatch the flag. Trash the base, including the generators powering the force fields, and your teammates will have a much easier time getting in.

Tombstone

Game: Capture the Flag

Features: Main bases and flag bases located far apart
from each other

Terrain: Moderate hills

Climate: Foggy

The twist in this CTF map is that each side has both a flag base and a main base, and they're not close together. The main base has the vital inventory stations, while the flag base has none. This ensures that your team will spend lots of time running back and forth between the two bases.

The flag base is not indefensible, though. It's guarded by a plasma turret and a missile turret, and the flag is in a small underground room. Place a few extra sensors, turrets, and mines in the area and it's a tough nut to crack.

Take down your enemy's main base first, then concentrate on the flag. Taking down the main base deprives the enemy of inventory and forces them to make repairs while you move on to better things—like attacking the flag base.

On defense, make sure that a few players are always guarding the main base as well as the flag base. The main base has upper entrances near the back; make sure these are outfitted with spider-clamp turrets and are monitored.

Ultima Thule
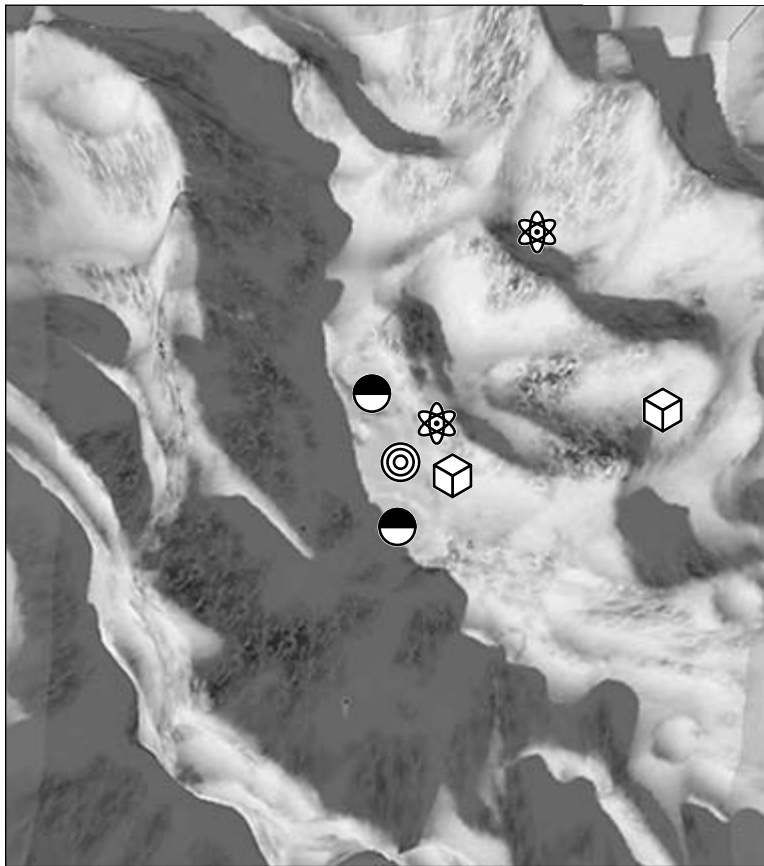
Game: Siege

Features: Generator bunker, underground base

Terrain: Mountainous

Climate: Snowing, good visibility

Ultima Thule features an underground base accessible by two turret-guarded bunkers. These bunkers are protected by force fields, however, so the attacker must first take down a pair of generators at the northern force field generator bunker. When both generators are down (one's upstairs, one's downstairs), the bunkers that give access to the underground base are open.

Inside the underground base, you must destroy three more generators: the eastern generator, the southern entrance generator, and the great hall generator. Only when these three generators are down will the force fields guarding the flag (in the great hall) drop.

As an attacker, you'll want to go full force at the northern bunker first, then turn your full attention to the two bunkers in the south. Beware the missile turrets atop these bunkers.

As a defender, gear up and hold the northern bunker as long as possible. If it gets destroyed, most of your team should fall back to the entrance bunkers, but one or two should try to repair the northern generators and get those shields back up.

Underhill
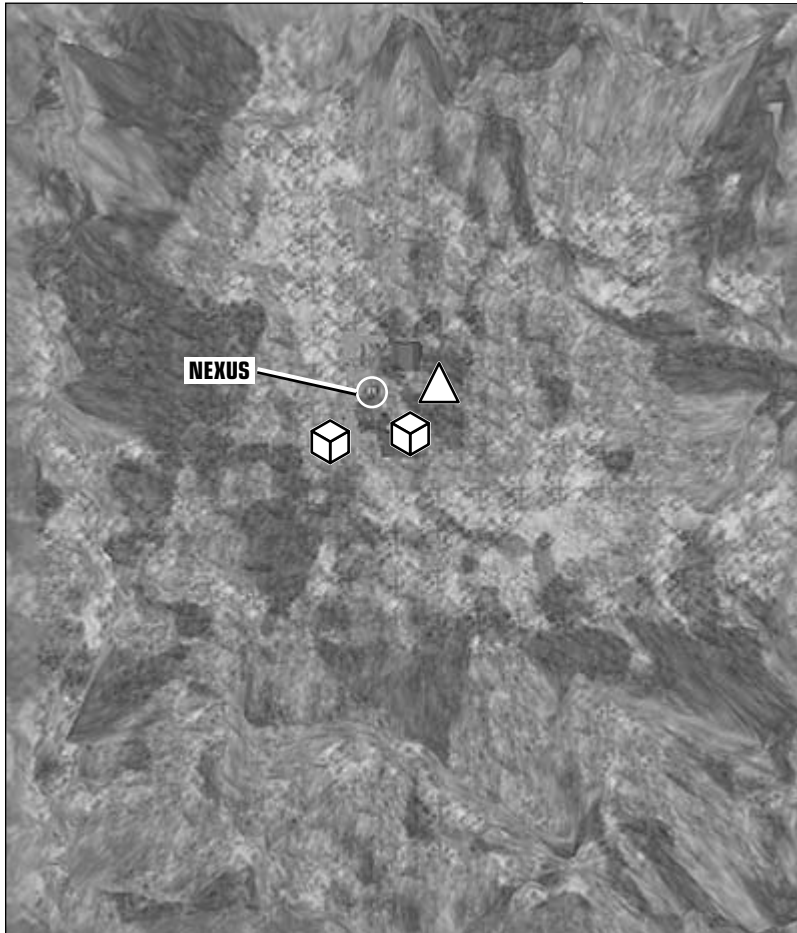
Games: Deathmatch, Hunters, Bounty

Features: Large, mostly underground base

Terrain: Mountainous, large indoor area

Climate: Foggy, mediocre visibility

Like Fracas and Casern Cavite, this is yet another multipurpose map dominated by a large central structure. Also, like in Casern Cavite, most of the inventory stations are inside the large central structure, but a single small bunker outside houses an extra inventory station.

The central structure is partially built into a hill. Pieces of it stick out from the hill, and a large walkway does a loop far above the ground. In Hunters games, the nexus is on the walkway. This makes the exterior of the map more important in Hunters.

In other game types, much of the action takes place inside, where the inventory stations are.

Use the heavier armor types when indoors and monopolize one of the more secluded inventory stations. The inventory station will keep you flush with ammo and energy, allowing you to rack up lots of kills as newcomers try to use the station.

WHITEOUT

Games: Deathmatch, Bounty

Features: Five towers, no inventory stations

Terrain: Mountainous, good skiing

Climate: Arctic, average visibility

This Deathmatch and Bounty map features five towers. There's different gear in each tower, but no inventory stations.

The central tower is stocked the best. It has healing items and grenades on the lowest level, assorted weapons like the sniper rifle and ELF gun on the next level up, and several packs on the level above that.

The outlying towers have less equipment. The northwest, bunker-style tower has a shield pack and a chaingun. The other three just have one weapon apiece, but they're good ones, including the grenade launcher, spinfusor, and plasma rifle.

Dash into the central tower and get some gear, then get out. The sniper rifle is particularly great if you take it and then move off toward the edge of the map. Or, you can avoid the center completely and grab a heavy-hitting weapon from one of the fringe towers.

INDEX

F

G

H