

BattlePlan Symbol Editor

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Overview

The BattlePlan Symbol Editor allows you to create and edit unit or terrain symbols for use in Incredible Simulations' Medieval Battle Simulation. Should you desire, you can even create an entirely new symbol set for use with the game.

Basic Structure

A symbol set encompasses three zoom or view levels of every terrain and unit symbol in the set. When playing a game, a Medieval battle scenario is linked to a particular symbol set. That symbol set determines the terrain and unit graphics which will be displayed on the screen. Note that ALL scenarios packaged with the initial release of Medieval use the single standard MEDIEVAL symbol set.

Menu Bar Options

The symbol editor has a task bar at the top of the screen which allows you to access files and set defaults for most of the important functions of the editor. The menu items on the taskbar are:

File

Open Symbol Set	Open a symbol set for editing
Create New Set	Create a new symbol set from scratch
Save Symbol Set	Saves current symbol set to disk
Save Symbol Set As	Saves current symbol set to disk with a new name
Exit	Exits the Battle Plan symbol editor and returns to Windows

Symbols

Map Board Symbols	Edit or create terrain symbols
Game Pieces	Edit or create unit symbols

Edit

Flip Image Left to Right	Flips the symbol being edited horizontally
Flip Image Top to Bot	Flips the symbol being edited vertically

Image Regions

Import Image Region	Brings an external BMP image file into the symbol editor for pasting into a symbol
Export Image Region	Output a symbol to an external BMP file

Preferences

Turn Grid Off	Toggles the drawing grid overlay on or off
AirBrush Settings	Set the size and flow of the airbrush tool
Set Transparent Color	Set the color in the symbol that will be transparent
Reset Symbol Order	Resets the order of the symbols to the order inwhich they were entered
Optimize Symbol Set	Defragments a symbol set

Help

Contents	Calls up the "online" help file
KeyWord Search	Allows you to search the help file index
About	BattlePlan Symbol editor version, credit, and copyright information

Creating a New Symbol Set

When creating a new symbol set, you can either copy any existing set to a new file and use that as a starting point or you can begin a new set from entirely from scratch.

Starting a New Set From Scratch

When starting a new set from scratch, you first have to determine the zoom level sizes of your terrain symbols. The display size of a single hex (in pixels) is adjustable for each zoom level. The total hexes per screen (at 640 x 480 resolution) is displayed next to the pixel size for reference.

The general rule of thumb is that at Zoom Level 1, you should be able to see the entire map/board. At Zoom Level 2, a typical piece's one turn movement path will be contained within the displayed hexes without having to scroll. Zoom Level 3 is usually set at double or triple Zoom Level 2 for detailed views of pieces and combats. Obviously, the larger the hexes, the less of them will fit on your screen at one time. On the other hand, the larger the hexes, the more detailed the map/board and pieces can be. What sizes you pick will depend on the scale of the game, and to some extent, the usual movement of pieces.

Symbols Menu

The Symbols menu contains the following two entries:

Map/Board Symbol

Select to edit or create the map/board (terrain) symbols of a set.

Piece Symbol

Select to edit or create the piece (unit) symbols of a set.

Symbol List Screen

Selecting either entry brings up the Symbol List screen. From this you may select the following:

Create New

Creates and adds a new symbol to the set. If it is a piece, you are allowed to adjust the size. You can use different size pieces in the same symbol set. Both pieces and map/board symbols must be named.

Copy

Copys an existing set symbol to a new symbol. This is extremely useful if you need to make pieces that are identical except for their color, or are similar but need minor changes.

Move Symbol Up (Down)

Moves symbols either up or down on the master list, allowing for a more logical grouping. This is handy if you've forgotten to make one symbol and you want it to show up next to all the other similar symbols.

Open

Opens the highlighted symbol on the list for editing. Alternately, simply double-click on any symbol on the master list and it will open.

Rename

Rename the highlighted symbol to whatever new name you desire.

Remove

Removes a symbol from the set. Once deleted, it cannot be undone. Note that symbols should not be removed from sets that have already been used in Medieval scenarios.

Exit

Return to the editing screen.

Image Regions

The Image Regions command is powerful feature which allows you select an image region (IE, a .bmp file) and paste it into your unit or terrain symbol.

Open Image Region

Opens a .bmp file for use in the current terrain or unit symbol. After you select the .bmp image, it is saved to the clipboard and you can place the cursor (normally in the upper left corner) onto the terrain or unit symbol. Click and the image will be placed onto the symbol. If the image region isn't pasted to the exact spot you'd like, just right click on the mouse button. The image you just pasted will be erased and you can left click to repaste it again.

Save Image Region As

This allows you to export a symbol or region to an external bmp file.

Preferences Menu

This menu controls the overall functioning of the symbol editor.

Turn Grid ON/OFF

Toggles the drawing grid on or off. The grid is there in order to assist you in drawing, but is not actually visible when playing a game.

Airbrush Settings

Adjust the size and flow of the Airbrush Tool.

Set Transparent Color

Allows you to pick a color which will be transparent when playing a game. If a symbol is designated as transparent, any pixels painted with the transparent color will allow the background map terrain to show through.

Reset Symbol Order

During the course of symbol editing, you are allowed to move symbols up and down on the master list in order to more logically group them. This menu item merely resets all symbols to the order inwhich they were entered.

Optimize Symbol Set

Defragments your symbol set. Using this option may decrease the size of your set files.

Drawing Modes

Set Draw Mode

This sets the editor to draw mode. By placing your mouse on the image and left clicking, you can change the pixel on which the mouse is pointing to the color shown on the primary color bar. By continuously pressing and moving the mouse, you can "draw" as you go.

Set Line Draw Mode

This allows you to easily draw a line by positioning the cursor, left-clicking, then dragging the endpoint to the desired location and releasing.

Filled Rectangle

This allows you to draw a rectangle by left-clicking and dragging the rectangle to the desired opposite corner. The rectangle will fill with the primary color.

Filled Ellipse

This allows you to draw an ellipse that is filled with the current primary color. Left-click then drag to create the area.

AirBrush

This feature "spray paints" the symbol area with the current primary color when the mouse is left-clicked. The size and flow are controlled via the taskbar menu, with defaults set at 5 and 5. This feature is useful for creating woods and rough terrain, etc.

Fill Region

This fills an enclosed region with the current primary color. You need to be sure the area you are trying to fill is fully enclosed, or the entire screen will get filled. If that happens hit the "undo" button.

Paste Image

This function only highlighted when the Open Image Region option or Select Image Region has been used and there is an image in the clipboard. Once an image has been copied to the clipboard, clicking on this button allows you to paste the contents of the clipboard into the symbol that you're currently editing. See Image Regions

Switch Color

This feature allows you to switch any color on the symbol with the current primary or secondary color.

Grab Color

Allows you set the primary or secondary drawing colors by clicking on a pixel color from the image. Move the cursor over a color on the image that you want capture then left click or make it your primary color or right click to make it your secondary color.

Draw Terrain Hexlines

This allows you to place a border around your hexes using the current primary color.

Add Text

This allows you to add text to the symbol. Note that at zoom level one, and probably two as well, there may not be enough pixels to properly display text. You have the options to change the font, color, and characteristics of the text.

Clear to Secondary Color

This wipes the entire display and fills it with the current secondary color. This feature is useful for restarting your current effort from scratch.

Select Region

This selects a rectangular region from the symbol edit screen and allows you to duplicate it. Drag and click the area you want to copy, then move the mouse to the upper left corner of the desired region to be changed. This can be used to copy an area between zoom levels or to export the region as an external BMP File.

Undo Last Action

This restores the display to how it looked just prior to your last editing action.

X-Image (Transparent Image)

When the X-Image box is checked, any pixels of the image painted with the transparent color (shown in the well directly to the right of the check box) will be transparent when the symbol is used in a Medieval Battle scenario.

Drawing Panel

The drawing panel is the actual "work area" where graphics modifications to a symbol take place. Depending upon which drawing mode is selected, left or right click the cursor on the symbol image in this panel to make graphic changes. The pixel coordinates of the cursor, drawing mode, and current zoom level are displayed along the bottom of the panel.

Zoom Panel

In the lower right hand corner of the screen resides the zoom level display panel. The zoom panel contains the following selections:

Zoom +

Brings up the next highest zoom level of the current symbol for editing

Zoom -

Brings up the next lowest zoom level of the current symbol for editing

Saves

Saves all three zoom levels of the current symbol to disk

Next

Allows you to quickly select the next Map or Piece symbol for editing.

Zoom Panel Display

The zoom panel display shows the name and actual size of the symbol currently being edited

Color Panel

The color panel resides in the upper right hand portion of the main screen. Use the color panel to select your primary and secondary colors for the symbol editor's Drawing Modes.

- Left click on a color to select it as a primary color, the left "color well" below the grid changes to the color selected.
- Right click on a color to select it as a secondary color, the right "color well" below the grid changes to the color selected.
- The color index displays a color's position the selection grid. Custom colors have no index and are represented as "---".

Click on the Custom button below the panel to define custom colors.

Appendix I:Symbol Design Notes

Unit Symbols

A special note must be made regarding unit symbols and facing. In Medieval there are two facing symbols for each unit:

- 1) Facing towards the right (east)
- 2) Facing toward the left or (west)

When adding a new unit symbol to a set, you must create both facings sequentially in the above order. A quick way to accomplish this is to:

- 1) Create the new unit drawing the left or east facing first
- 2) Next copy the unit you just created to a new symbol with the copy command from the Symbol Screen
- 3) Edit the unit symbol by flipping the image left to right from the Edit Menu

Starting a New Symbol Set Based off the Medieval Set

To use the original Medieval set as a base set for your own scenario development, you should simply copy it to a new symbol set.

- 1) Select Create New Set from the File Menu
- 2) Next select Copy Existing Set from the creation sub menu
- 3) From the file menu, select Medieval
- 4) Now save the new set under the name of your choice

You may now edit this new set as you please and use it in the BattlePlan scenario editor without having any impact on the original Medieval scenarios.

Appendix II:Using External Paint Programs

The BattlePlan symbol editor uses standard Windows .BMP files which gives you the flexibility to customize any symbol set with your favorite Windows paint applications. The following is a list of the graphic file types used in a set:

The Unit Files

FileName-U1.BMP	Zoom level 1 Unit BMP file
FileName-U2.BMP	Zoom level 2 Unit BMP file
FileName-U3.BMP	Zoom level 3 Unit BMP file

The Terrain Files

FileName-T1.BMP	Zoom level 1 Terrain BMP file
FileName-T2.BMP	Zoom level 2 Terrain BMP file
FileName-T3.BMP	Zoom level 3 Terrain BMP file

The Mask Files

FileName-M1.BMP	Zoom level 1 Mask BMP file
FileName-M2.BMP	Zoom level 2 Mask BMP file
FileName-M3.BMP	Zoom level 3 Mask BMP file

Notes:

- Symbol set files used in Medieval are located in the Battles subdirectory
- Mask files (used for transparent symbols) are generated by the symbol images contained in both the terrain and unit files and should NOT be edited externally
- After editing any transparent symbols in an external paint program, you should reload the symbol set into the BattlePlan editor and call up any symbols modified and resave them. This will generate a new mask for the symbols which will preserve any transparent areas.

- You may also perform "spot" symbol modifications in external programs by doing the following:

- 1) Select the entire symbol with the select region tool. See Drawing Modes
- 2) Next, export the symbol to an external BMP file from the Image Regions Menu.
- 3) Next edit and save the exported symbol in the paint program of your choice.
- 4) When finished, import the edited symbol back into the BattlePlan editor and paste the new image back into the symbol with the paste image tool.

Appendix III:Aide de Camp 2 Compatibility

ADC2 users will have noticed that the BattlePlan Symbol Editor looks amazingly similar to the one included with HPS Simulations' ADC2. That's because it's basically the same editor. The Battle Plan symbol editor is the same as ADC2's minus a few options not necessary to the operation of Medieval. Any ADC2 symbol set created in RealHex Vertical orientation should be compatible for use within Medieval.

Appendix IV:Contacting Incredible...

If you have any questions or comments concerning Medieval, The BattlePlan Scenario Designer, or Symbol Editor, please feel free to contact Incredible Simulations at:

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