

Advance Wars Design Maps Mode Guide

by Uiru

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Advace Wars: Design Maps Mode guide (v. 1.1)

by Uiru (uiru@cephiro.com)

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The purpose of this guide is to review the capabilities and the limits of the Design Maps mode in Advance Wars. This mode allows you to create your own battle maps that you and your friends can battle on; or you can duel computer opponents. With the help of this guide, you can maximize the appearance and function of your custom maps.

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~1. Updates~

Mar. 15, 2002- Little updates here and there.

Feb. 23, 2002- Got bored, began guide. Chances of posting it: 50%.

~2. Controls~

When you enter Design Maps mode, you will be presented with a randomly generated map. Use the Control Pad to move the cursor. Press the R button to access the map tiles, such as mountains and buildings, and the L button to access the units. Press A to place the current tile/unit at the cursor's location, and B to copy whatever the cursor is on. (If your last operation was with the tiles, it will copy the tile. If it was units, it will copy the unit.) Press Start to see your whole map at once, and Select to access the menu. The menu commands are:

File: Load, save, and name up to three maps. The width of the letters are NOT fixed, so the number of available spaces may change depending on the letters you use.

Help: Conditions and instructions.

Intel: Will tell you how many bases, ports, airports and cities you have of each color, as well as neutral cities.

Fill: Will wipe the map clean, and fill it with a certain terrain type. You can use plains, mountains, forests, or oceans. You can also have it generate a completely random (yet sensible) map for you.

End: Leave Design Maps mode. Nell will ask you if you've saved or not.

~3. Map Restrictions~

The game gives you one restriction straight off: you need to have at least two armies to start. That means two HQs and at least one 'production' property or one unit for each. Interestingly enough, you can have HQless armies in play. These do not have turns and cannot be controlled, either by players or computer, and do not have any particular CO attribute. Units will, however, attack back.

~i. Map Dimensions~

The map's dimensions are 30 tiles across by 20 tiles down. This is moderately large, but there are some War Room maps that dwarf it. Most Campaign levels can be recreated in Design Maps mode if you have that kind of patience.

~ii. Properties~

You are allowed to have up to 60 properties on your map at one time.

~ii. Units~

You can only have 50 units of any one color in play at once, which means that no more than 200 units can ever be deployed at the same time. However, in VS and Link Battles, you can use the Options menu to remove units you don't need.

~iv. Characters~

Obviously, you can have no more than four COs playing your map at one time. However, more than one player can use the same CO. The color of the army does not affect a character's performance: Orange Star is exactly the same as Blue Moon, except one is orange and the other blue.

~v. Computer AI~

A computer opponent is a computer opponent. It doesn't matter which CO they are assigned; they will still do pretty much the same thing. Grit will make as many Tanks as Rockets; Eagle will go out to sea. Also, when their CO Power bars finish charging, they will be used the next turn (except for Eagle, who will use his at the end of the same turn). In other words, it's pretty simple to outsmart the AI, so if you're creating personal challenges, try to stack the odds in favor of the computer.

A computer ally on your team can be a liability; they will not leave you property or attempt to help you in any way. They just won't openly attack or deliberately block you.

~4. Map Tiles~

Access these by pressing the R button.

~i. Bridge~

Bridges cannot 'bend'. They are the over-water equivalent of Roads, and have no Defence Rating. Bridges must start next to a land tile and it looks better if they terminate next to one as well. They cannot be placed in 'corners' of land tiles. See the diagram.

LLL
L|S
LSS

A Bridge (|) cannot start here.

~ii. Road~

Roads allow easier transport of heavy equipment, especially Missiles and Rockets. They have no Defence Rating, and cannot be used over water. Though they can run alongside each other, it doesn't look very good. Trying to put a Road over a River will automatically create a Bridge.

~iii. Reef~

The aquatic version of Forests. They have a Defence unit of 1 and can hide ships in Fog of War, but they also slow them down. Reefs cannot be placed next to land tiles, but they can be put next to Bridges.

~iv. Shoal~

A beach, that allows Lander type units to land. Shoals can only be placed at the edges of Land tiles, and will block access from Ports. They cannot be placed on Ocean tiles that are surrounded on two opposite sites by Land units. Land units can move over Shoals, but ocean units cannot (except for Landers). See the diagrams.

LLS
LPB
SBS

The Port (P) in this diagram is surrounded by Land tiles and Shoals (B). Ships cannot enter or exit this Port, unless they are Landers.

LLL LSLL LLL
SBS SBLL SBL
LLL SSSS SSL

The first two are impossible; however, the third is fine.

LLL
SBS
SBS
LLL

In the game, this will look like two land masses and two beaches separated by water; however, land-based units can cross here. I like to refer to this as a 'land bridge'.

~v. River~

Rivers can only be traversed by soldier units (and bridges). They can bend, but they cannot run alongside another river. Also, they will not look good unless they terminate next to a sea tile. This tile must have two land tiles next to it, as well. See the diagram:

SSS
SDS
RLR

where the S are sea tiles, the R is the end of the river and the L are land tiles (either plains, roads, mountains, forests, bases, whatever). The D is actually a river tile out in the ocean, and must have three sea tiles on each of its sides. Lastly, they have a Defence rating of 2.

~vi. Forest~

Forests can hide units in Fog of War. They have a Defence unit of 2. It is difficult to move equipment over them, and in bad weather, almost impossible.

~vii. Mountain~

Only soldier and air units can move over Mountains. These have a Defence rating of 4.

~viii. Seas~

Water. Ships can move in it. Does not have a Defence Rating.

~ix. Plain~

The standard grassy field. Fields offer a Defence Rating of 1.

~x. Buildings~

These are the properties. HQs have a Defence Rating of 4; the others 3. Equipment moves easily through them regardless of weather. HQs, Bases, and Cities will restore 2 HP to land-based units of the same color that are standing on them every turn, as well as fill up their ammo and fuel. Airports do the same for airplanes and Ports for ships.

The turns go in this order: Orange Star, Blue Moon, Green Earth, Yellow Comet. (Black Hole cannot be used, unfortunately.) The direction the units face is dependant on the order in which they are selected. If all four are used, Orange Star and Green Earth will face right and Blue Moon and Yellow Comet will face left. However, if you don't use Orange Star, it changes to Blue Moon and Yellow Comet facing right and Green Earth facing left. The first one in the order you use faces right and it alternates back and forth. So, in the interests of looking nice, try to base your right-facing armies towards the left half of the map and your left-facing armies towards the right.

~5. VS & Link Battle Rules~

First of all, these two modes are identical, except that VS Mode is run on one system that is passed between human players, and Link Battle uses several GBA's, cartridges, and link cables. If it's just you going against the computer, VS Mode is what you're looking for.

You can buy many, many maps in Battle Maps, which is also where you buy your COs. The more you get, the more you can use. You can also use War Room maps, though these are recommended for players of greatly differing skill levels as one side is usually horribly disadvantaged. Most importantly, however, you can use the three maps you've created in Design Maps.

You can toggle the following rules in VS & Link Battle modes:

Fog on/off: This turns Fog of War on and off. When fog is on and there are two or more human players, a prompt screen will show up at the beginning of each player's turn to keep opponents from gaining intel. (When there's no fog, the HP of Sonja's units will be visible to the next player in line. Just another reason why Sonja shouldn't be used when there's no fog.)

Weather clear/rain/snow/random: Choosing a weather type means it's always that weather type. Random will occasionally change from clear to rain or snow, and back again in one turn. (If it begins to snow at the beginning of Green Earth's turn, for example, it'll stop snowing

at the beginning of Green Earth's next turn. Natural snow or rain do not affect Olaf or Drake.)

Funds 1000~9500: In 500 intervals, you can set the amount of money you get from each captured property.

Turn 5~99: At the end of the specified number of turns, whoever has the most property wins.

Capt 1~59: The number of properties you can require to be captured varies, and depends on how you set up your map. The upper limit is always (total number of properties - 1), the one being your own HQ. (If you have 60 properties in play- the limit- the upper limit will be 59). The lower limit is (largest number of property + 1). If there are more neutral property than owned property, the lower limit will be all the neutral properties + 1. If any color has more property, the limit will be whichever has the most + 1.

CO Power on/off: Turns on and off the CO Power bar. COs will still have their individual abilities and strengths, but they won't be able to use their CO Powers.

Visuals off/A/B/C: Turns the visuals on and off. Personally, I find that battles go much faster with the animations off. A is battle and capture animation, B is battle only and C is battle only for human players.

~6. Suggested Game Types~

These are just suggestions of kinds of games you can set up and play. If you have any more, feel free to EMail me.

~i. The Final Battle...?~

Set up these kinds of games by giving one army a huge number of resources, and easily defendable terrain. You could have Sonja in the fog, Olaf in the snow, or Kanbei with a large funds per base setting to make it even tougher. Then, have one, two, or three armies team up to take on the tyrant.

~ii. Property Races~

A HQ placed on a single tile of land and surrounded by sea is absolutely uncapturable. Use this to create two, three, or four-way property race missions that will keep on until the very end. Note that it's not a good idea to use teams in property race missions as it may become impossible to finish.

~iii. The Gauntlet~

Set up a long path through the mountains, with a single undefended enemy HQ at the end. Start one player with a number of land-based units and the other with the capacity to create traps, in the way of Rockets and Artillery. The goal is for the first player is to capture the base, while the goal of the second is to stop him! Add a time limit for additional challenge.

~iv. Alone in the Fog~

Start each player off with a single Soldier away from their HQ in the darkness of Fog of War. You'll have to create your own army from scratch, and hope you don't stumble upon an enemy you aren't prepared for!

~v. Grudge Match!~

Max VS Grit: This 'predeployed' map style will see Max equipped with all manner of Tanks and Mid Tanks, while Grit is holed up with enough Artillery and Rockets to start a war! Go naval with Submarines and Battleships and bring this feud to a whole new level. Keep it real by not using bases.

Eagle VS Drake: Creating a good Eagle VS Drake map will require advanced skills, as you'll have to balance the land and sea aspects of the stage perfectly to keep it from becoming one-sided.

Sonja VS Sami: The cutest battle ever. :) Predeploy lots of Infantry, Mechs and Transport Copters for Sami, and see if she can sneak past Sonja's hidden defences and capture the HQ! Again, it's more effective without bases.

Olaf VS Sturm: Who's the bigger goober? Find out! Set up this map with plenty of forests and narrow paths. Sturm has a full movement range over everything except when it snows, which brings him to a standstill. That's Olaf's time to strike!

~vi. Stress Release~

Set any number of armies against Olaf. Set the weather to 'rain'. :D

~7. Credits, Legal~

Advance Wars is owned by Nintendo. If you thought anything different, see a doctor. This guide, on the other hand, is copyright 2002 Uindamu Uiru. Don't touch it unless you want to experience a point blank Mid Tank round.

I would like to point out that the only reason I am doing this guide is to have an excuse NOT to do my Pok~~émon~~on Crystal walkthrough, as spending six hours trying to get a good Raikou and still winding up with trash irritates me greatly. So, thank Raikou. Or it'll bite you. Hard.

Everything here is a result of my own research. Anything that is submitted to me and is used will be credited appropriately.

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