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Mount & Blade

With Fire and Sword



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CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

TaleWorlds
Entertainment

paradox
INTERACTIVE

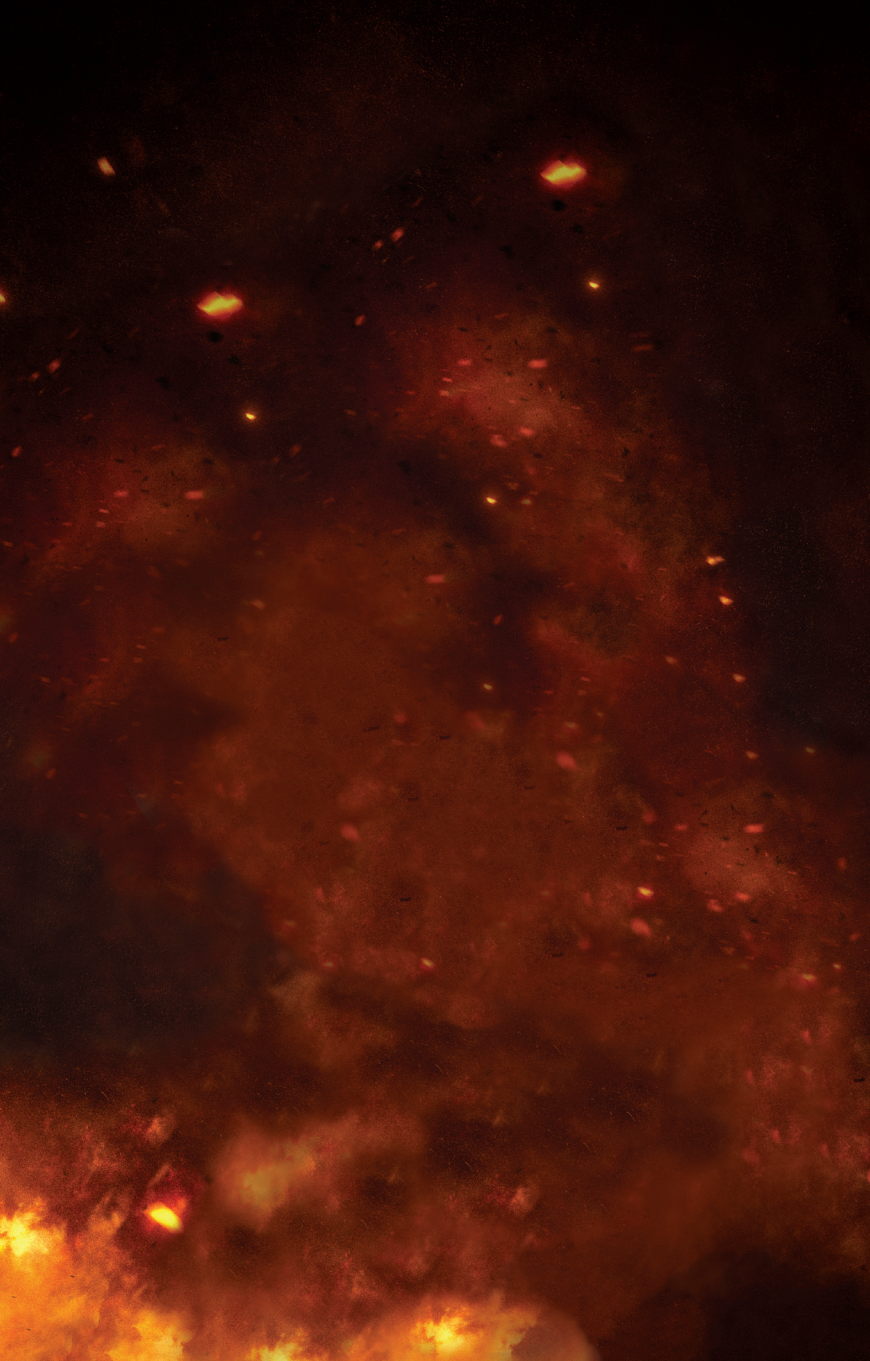


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Introduction



Seize command of Moscow, and unite the lands under your firm hand. Repel the Swedish invasion, or discover the sacred artifacts that stand at the very origins of the Grand Duchy of Russia.

You can choose between three sides, and take part in historical events of the 17th Century, when western Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic countries waged bitter war across the lands of Sweden, Muscovy, the Polish Republic, the Zaporozhian Army, and the Crimean Khanate.

In the game Mount & Blade: With Fire and Sword, lead nations and interact with real historical figures, including King John Casimir, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and Bogdan Khmelnitsky. Upon completing certain tasks and gaining the trust of one of the rulers, you may enter his service and personally influence the course of historical events of the 17th Century.

Characther Traits and Skills

Character Creation

The game begins with the character creation screen, where you can design your avatar. You can choose his appearance and age, think of a name, and determine your hero's skills, abilities, and other characteristics.

Your character will develop as you gain experience, which is accomplished by performing certain tasks and by defeating enemies in battle, both independently and with the help of the army under your command. When you gain enough experience, your character will rise to the next level, which awards you with one attribute point, one skill point, and ten weapon points, which you may invest in your character's development.

You may view information about your character and allocate his points on a special screen, which can access from the main menu or by pressing the C key (by default – but default key commands can be reassigned).

Attributes

Your character has four major attributes which affect what you can do in very profound ways. Attributes give you immediate advantages, but they



also allow you to increase any skills that are dependent on that attribute. When you create a new character, you will receive four points to spend on your attributes, and each time you gain a level, you will receive one more. These choices cannot be changed once they are committed, so be sure to spend them wisely!

The attributes are:

- **Strength.** *Each point of Strength will increase your health by one point, and increase the damage you can inflict in melee combat.*
- **Agility.** *Each point spent on this feature increases the speed of your attack by 0.5%, and gives you five additional weapon proficiency points to spend as you like.*
- **Intelligence.** *Each point spent on this feature gives you an additional skill point.*
- **Charisma.** *Each point of Charisma increases your maximum party size by one.*

Skills

There are two types of skills. *Personal skills* only apply to the individual characters. Just because you're good at riding a horse doesn't mean all your companions automatically become good riders as well. *Party skills*, by contrast, apply to your entire troop. Only one character in the party needs to know the skill for the whole party to gain its benefit, though the skill will become more effective if the leader (your character) also knows something about it.

Using Weapons

There are six types of weapons in the game, and if you're going to take a direct role in battles, you would be wise to master one or two types of weapons. A higher level of proficiency will let you attack and defend with a melee weapon with greater speed, or will increase your accuracy with ranged weapons.

Your skill with a weapon will increase as you use the weapon in battle. Melee weapons are practiced simply by causing damage, while missile weapons benefit more from difficult, long-range shots.

Controls

Moving on Foot

By default, your character can be moved with the standard movement keys: W, A, S, and D:

- **W** – *walk forward*
- **S** – *walk backward*
- **A** – *sidestep left*
- **D** – *sidestep right*

You can look around using the mouse. If you are walking, then using the mouse will change your direction of travel. If you press the Forward key, your character will turn in whatever direction the camera is pointing.



Horseback Riding

Controlling the horse is slightly different:

- **W** – *spur the horse forward*
- **S** – *reign in the horse*
- **A** – *turn left*
- **D** – *turn right*

Your mouse will change which way you are looking, but not which way the horse is moving,

You can stop the horse by reigning it in until you stop. If your horse is moving backwards, you can tap *W* to make it stop.

Horses are not as good at climing as people, so pay attention to hills. Also, they cannot turn so quickly, particularly at high speeds.

Other Controls

Outside combat / general commands:

- **F**– *Perform an action indicated by a keyword.*
- **I** – *Open the Inventory window.*
- **P** – *Open your Party window.*
- **C** – *Open your Character window.*
- **L** – *Open your Log.*
- **Esc** – *Open the game menu, where you can save, quit, or adjust your options.*
- **F12** – *Quicksave the game.*
- **TAB** – *Leave the current area.*
- **Spacebar (press)** – *Cancel a destination and pause time on the world map.*
- **Spacebar (hold)** – *Passes time on the world map;*
- **Ctrl + left mouse button** – *Sends the item under your cursor to the other side of the table, when trading or looting.*

Real-time / in combat:

- **Left mouse button (press)** – *Perform a quick attack with the current weapon.*
- **Left mouse button (hold)** – *Begin aiming with a ranged weapon, or initiate and hold a melee stroke which will be executed when you release the button.*
- **Space**– *Jump with your character or horse.*
- **Right mouse button (hold)** – *Defend yourself with your shield or weapon.*
- **Right mouse button (press)** –*Remove the sight (when using long-range weapons).*
- **Right mouse button (hold)** – *Free the camera to orbit the character, even while moving.*
- **Shift (hold)** – *Zoom in temporarily.*
- **The keys F1-F11 and 1-5** – *Issue commands during battle.*
- **R** – *Switch between a first and third person.*
- **X** – *Switch firearms in melee combat.*
- **Mouse Wheel (roll up)** – *Cycle through your weapons.*
- **Wheel mouse (roll down)** – *Raise or lower your shield.*

Equipment and Supplies

Properties of Equipment



Detailed information about items will be shown if you move your mouse over the item. All items have a weight and a value. Other information about the item will vary depending on the item type.

Each weapon has a condition rating which indicates how well or poorly it is made, or how much abuse it has suffered over its lifetime. Weapons that are Cracked, Chipped, Bent or Rusty will deliver less damage than new weapons (and will be much cheaper), whereas weapons that are Heavy will deliver a little more damage at the cost of being a little slower. Weapons that are Balanced or made of Tempered Steel will deliver a little more damage and be a little faster, while also being much more costly. Strong bows will cause more damage with increased accuracy, but shooting is slower. A high-quality pistol does more damage, and can be fired more quickly.

Weapon properties:

- **The type and amount of damage** – *Weapons vary in the amount of damage they can inflict, as well as the type of damage. Damage can be dealt in one*

of three types: ranged, such as muskets and bows; thrust, such as a spear; and swung, such as an axe or club. Some weapons allow you to combine damage types, and thus have several damage types indicated.

- **Weapon range** – *the distance from which you can reliably hit the target.*
- **Speed** – *the rate at which you can strike with this weapon.*
- **Breaking shields** – *some types of weapons (axes, for example) can break through enemy shields.*
- **Weapon limitations** – *some types of weapons (such as muskets) cannot be used while you are on horseback.*

Armor also has a condition rating. Armor that is Tattered, Ragged, Battered, or Crude will protect you less than new armor (while being much cheaper); armor that is Sturdy, Thick, or Reinforced will provide greater protection (and will be much more expensive).

Shields too have condition ratings. Shields that are Cracked or Battered have seen hard service, and will be more easily damaged than new shields, whereas shields that are Thick or Reinforced were constructed with extra care, and will withstand more damage. If a shield is broken during combat, it will degrade one level. If it is already "Cracked", it will become permanently destroyed.

Shield properties:

- **Durability** – *The amount of damage that the shield can withstand before being broken. Shields are automatically repaired back to full durability between each skirmish, though when it is broken in combat, it will degrade one level (i.e. you can't make a "battered" shield back into a normal one).*
- **Resistance** – *This is the toughness of the shield, which makes it more difficult to damage. The Resistance value is subtracted from the damage sustained by the shield. Thus, a shield with a Resistance of 5, when blocking a hit of 30 damage, would suffer only 25 damage to itself.*
- **Size** – *The physical width and height of the shield. Larger shields tend to be heavier, but offer improved protection against incoming projectiles. A shield offers the same amount of melee protection regardless of its size.*
- **Speed** – *This represents how quickly the shield will be ready after you begin to block. With a fast shield there is effectively no delay, while a large shield will have a noticeable delay before you are able to raise it into position.*

Wearing Equipment and Encumbrance

The current equipment of your character is shown in the center of the character screen. The right-hand column shows the character's weapons, and the left shows the character's clothing and armor. To use an object, you usually will need to first put it in one of these slots. The total weight of your gear is also shown. The more weight you are lugging around, the slower your character will move while on foot. You can reduce the effects of carried weight by increasing your Athletics skill.



Cities

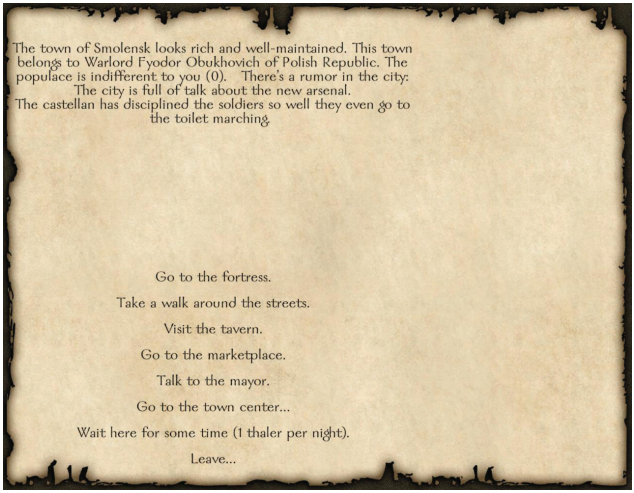
In cities you can walk around the neighborhood, visit the tavern, go to the market and listen to the town gossip. In addition, you can perform a number of orders of the local chapter to earn some money.

Trade

During a walk through the courtyard in the towns, castles and villages you can always find dealers. In order to buy or sell anything, just walk up to the merchant just walk up to them until you see the "Talk" label, and then press the use key. You can then return to the city when you are finished.

Trade is a party skill, so if one member of your party knows the skill, you will always receive a discount when buying – or an increased profit when you sell anything.

Prices vary depending on the demand and supply in the towns and villages. It is wise to spend some time trying to learn market prices, and find out what goods yield the greatest return. Profiting from trade is simple: find a place where they will pay more for something that is cheaper someplace else.





Caravans

The game "With Fire and Sword" provides an opportunity to equip a trading caravan. This will allow you to buy a large quantity of goods at a discount and sell it in another city for a large profit – or a loss – depending on how high your bargaining skills are.

You can hire a trading caravan with the city mayor. You have only to choose a destination, a commodity type, and the size of the caravan. Once a convoy is established, you will want to accompany your caravan to a final waypoint. Otherwise it will likely be attacked by bandits, and you will lose a lot of money.

Taverns

All towns also have a tavern where you can find many interesting and useful people. Mercenaries can often be found here – men who you can recruit to fight alongside you. If you are lucky, you can also find other adventurers here who may be willing to join your party and become your companions. Such companions are very useful, as you can equip and level them up as you do your own character, and they will contribute to your party skills. You might also find traveling booksellers, from whom you can purchase rare books. You might elsewhere meet a slaver, to whom you can sell one or two captives who you are having trouble ransoming or recruiting.

Also in the tavern you might meet travelers who, for a small fee, will tell you about the whereabouts of a particular person, or speak of the latest developments in other lands. Occasionally you might join someone for a drink, but beware that whenever there is drinking, brawling is never far behind.

Management of Cities and Villages

If you manage to capture a town or village, you can assist in its growth and development, and hire individuals to positions of responsibility.

First, you must speak with the head of the village or city. The difficulty of expanding the city will be based on the engineering skill of your character, and amount of money needed for the construction and maintenance of a building. Skill points invested in Engineering can reduce the time required to complete the construction of a building.

Urban construction

- **Arsenal** – *Each week, a small number of low-level soldiers are added to the city garrison. This building requires monthly maintenance costs.*
- **Water supply** – *Increases the welfare of the city, and improve the population's attitude toward you. Requires monthly maintenance costs.*
- **Academy** – *Increases the welfare of the city, and also allows you to pay for the training of one of your companions. Such education takes 14 days, and increases a chosen skill by one point.*



- **Merchant Guild** – *Increases the percentage of taxes collected from the city, but reduces the overall welfare of the city. Allows you to take a loan and pay interest.*
- **Fortifications** – *When storming a fortified city, the attacker loses some of his troops.*
- **Treasury** – *A city that boasts a treasury receives taxes on all lands in your possession. Thus, you are spared from having to collect taxes from each settlement separately. You can only build one treasury.*
- **Barracks** – *This superior arsenal adds one high-level soldier to the garrison each week. Requires monthly maintenance costs of the building.*
- **Stable** – *Adds horse-mounted troops to the garrison each week. Requires monthly maintenance costs.*

Village buildings

- **Mill** – *Increases the welfare of the village – and the amount of taxes collected.*
- **Barn** – *Like the mill, the barn increases the wealth and income from the village.*
- **School** – *Increases the amount of taxes collected.*
- **Hidden cache** – *If ever the village is over-run, if it has a hidden cache, it does not receive the status of "Looted." Instead, its wealth is reduced only by one third.*
- **Village council** – *increases the amount of taxes collected, and increases the welfare of the village.*

City offices

- **Weapon-master** – *Increases the number of soldiers in the garrison. Can create weapons or firearms made to order.*
- **Armor-master** – *Like the weapon-master, the armor-master increases the number of soldiers in the garrison, and creates custom-made armor.*
- **Horse master** – *Increases the number of mounted troops in the garrison.*
- **Messenger** – *Allows you to issue instructions to the Mayor while you're out of town.*
- **Prosecutor** – *Increases the amount of taxes collected, and improves the population's attitude toward you.*
- **Paymaster** – *Significantly increases the amount of taxes collected, but reduces the overall welfare of the city.*
- **Trade Guild Master** – *Increases the income from the city – not so much as the Paymaster, but he does not reduce the welfare of the city.*
- **Priest** – *Improves the population's attitude toward you.*
- **Garrison commander** – *Each week, recruits a small number of high-level soldiers for the garrison.*

Village offices

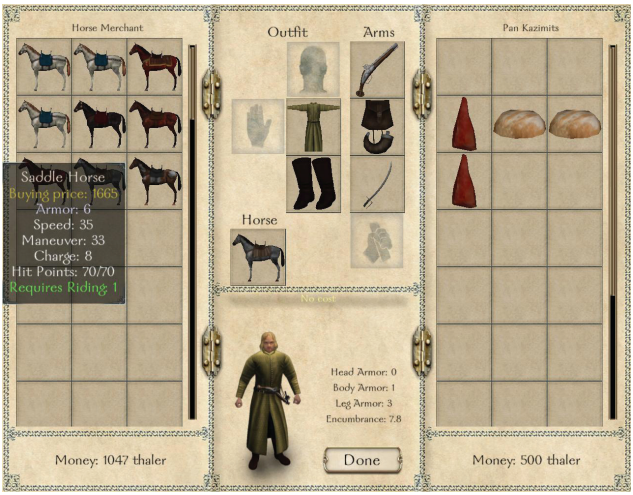
- **Village Justice** – *Increases the income from the village.*
- **Treasurer** – *Increases the amount of taxes collected.*
- **Holy father** – *Improves the welfare of the village, and increases the taxes collected.*
- **Clerk** – *Improves the population's attitude toward you.*

In the central square you can interact with the city or village officials. There you can order elite weapons or armor, or pay to have your units trained.



Horses

Breeds of Horses



The game features several breeds of horses, some better suited to a given task than others, and each with its own price range. Archers have little need for a heavy military horse in full armor, and Lancers cannot attack well while riding an old mule.

- **Pack horses or mules** – *These are the cheapest, bred by farmers who use mules as riding and pack animals. Mules can often be found in the caravan processions.*
- **Race horses** – *These are also relatively inexpensive, and are distinguished by their gentle-tempered and mild gait. A good and inexpensive horse for travel.*
- **Nomad-bred steppe horses** – *These are a fairly small animals, but you can find no bolder mount. They are as swift as race horses, but have greater endurance and agility.*
- **Warhorses** *move more slowly all the others, but are much stronger and can wear Cloth armor. Such horses are typically used by heavy cavalry, and are trained to sweep the enemy rather than avoid them,* which makes such animals very dangerous in combat against infantry.

You can buy horses from traders, but they rarely have a wide selection. Before you buy a horse, hover the mouse pointer over it to evaluate the beast. The higher its performance, the better:

- **Speed** – *The steed's maximum speed on level ground.*
- **Agility** – *Measures how quickly the horse can turn around and speed up or slow down. More agile horses are capable of more difficult maneuvers.*
- **Armor** – *The horse's resistance to attacks. Your steed's armor works much the same way as your own armor.*
- **Charge** – *How much blunt damage the horse will inflict if it tramples over an enemy at top speed.*

You may encounter a lame horse, an old horse with a rounded back, or a particularly mean-spirited animal. Such horses differ from others: a lame horse will naturally be slower, due to its injuries, but over time they can recover; horses with rounded backs, too, go a little slower than others; and only those whose riding skills are very well developed can hope to ride a hot-blooded steed. However, all such horses are priced much lower than similar mounts. Also, you may encounter a horse with exceptional features: a frisky horse which is faster and more agile than normal, or a heavy, hardier horse, better able to trample its enemies. However, such horses are particularly expensive.

Diplomacy

After becoming the ruler of Muscovy and the Commonwealth, you will be able to engage in diplomacy, and through your ambassadors will be able to make peace with the various other states, after paying a small indemnity – or if you prefer, you may declare war. Diplomatic centers can be found in the capitals of Moscow and Warsaw.

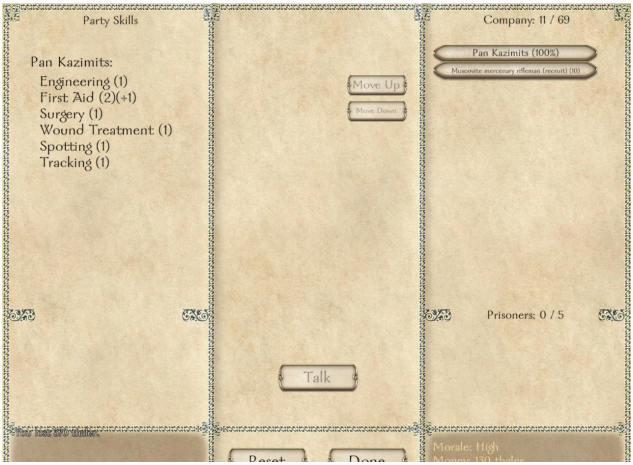


World Map



If you are in town, you can open the map by pressing the *Tab* key, or by clicking "Exit" (which opens the city menu). Navigation of the world map is very easy: just click the left mouse button wherever you wish to travel, and your squad will move there. Movement takes some time, but you can at any moment pause by pressing the *Spacebar*.

Party Management



Sooner or later you will meet a large group of people hungry for your death (or at least your money and equipment), and at this point you will need your own team.

The window unit is called by pressing P. In the upper right corner, the cells that take up the characters or mercenaries. Also outlined here, the maximum size of your squad. In the left pane lists all the skills - your character comes first, and then all employed by the satellites.

In your party, there are three types of people:

- **Heroes** – *Yourself and anybody else possessing special skills that you can convince to join your party. Heroes have individual names, and you can determine how each of them will level up by spending points on character development the same way you can for your own character. You can also give them specific equipment that you want them to use during battle.*
- **Regular troops** – *These are the people you hire from the local tavern, recruit from villages, or rescued from captivity. Unfortunately, they are mere "cannon fodder". They have no names, no parties, and nothing of worth in this world. They can gain experience and increase their levels, and you can outfit your mercenaries however you see fit, in the camp menu.*

- **Prisoners** – *Disgraced, defeated, and bound in chains. Whether you ransom them from the ransom broker, sell them into slavery or try to impress them into joining you, their fate is in your hands.*

Recruitment of Soldiers and Mercenaries

You may hire soldiers in urban areas, and recruit them from among your captives, but you may also hire mercenaries – in a total of five different camps, one for each nation in the game. Each mercenary camp is sells mercenaries and the equipment traditional to their nation. To engage a mercenary force, you should speak with the mercenary captain.

Mercenaries are divided into three types:

- **Warriors** – *These troops have higher skills in close combat.*
- **Archers** – *They have higher skills in shooting with bows and muskets.*
- **Riders** – *Such troops are excellent in the saddle, and are adept at swiftly breaking the enemy line.*

Equipment

The mercenary captain can also improve or change the equipment of your hired troops. Note that this increases the cost of hiring troops, and when selecting equipment, remember that some types of weapons and firearms have limitations when used on horseback.





Training your soldiers

If your character has developed the "Trainer" skill, then your hired troops will become more experienced during battles and daily drills, and consequently will improve their performance. You can choose to increase the level of your fighters: if you do so, the higher-level troop will be more skilful in assisting in victory over the enemy. However, there is greater cost in maintaining higher-level units. As they gain experience, your soldiers will pass through four stages: recruits, experienced, veterans, and elite.

Battles



Sometimes on the world map you will meet two enemy squads, engaged with each other in battle. If you wish to join the battle and take sides side, you may support your ally and assist in your enemy's defeat. Alternatively, you can rush to battle by attacking the enemy, or wait for the enemy to attack you. After the battle commences, you can take several actions, depending on the parties involved.

- **Retreat.** *Perhaps this battle is best left for another day... But be warned that battles cannot always be avoided, particularly if your party is too slow, or if the enemy significantly outnumbers you.*
- **Order your troops to attack without you.** *If you have some units under your command, you can send them into battle while you stay back. This can be quite useful when you greatly outnumber the enemy. However, it is wise to show caution. Usually your troops will not fight at full strength when battling without their leader. If you join the battle in person, you cannot leave until the battle is finished.*
- **Attack the enemy.** *Lead your men into battle. Groups with whom you enter into battle are chosen randomly, but the selection is determined by their position*

in your list: those who appear first on the list are more likely to appear on the battlefield. Therefore, before the battle it is recommended you adjust list as you see fit, by using the "Up" and "Down" arrows.

- **Retreat, leaving several soldiers to cover the rear.** *As a good tactician, you can leave part of your squad at the mercy of the enemy, while you yourself, along with the rest of the party, retreats from the battlefield. The number of units required to hold off the pursuing enemy depends on your "Tactics" skill.*

If you have already joined the battle started, it will command a mixed army, consisting of both your and of the allied soldiers. If you encounter a battle between two neutral parties to you, it's better not to intervene. The battlefield - not the best place for politics and spontaneous decisions.

Battle Phases

Battles go through several phases, depending on the "Battle size" which you have specified in the game settings. "Battle size" determines how many groups at a time can be on the battlefield. This limitation is shared between the two sides, in accordance with the combat strength of their respective troops, which is based on the size of each of the parties and the development of the skills of the individual units.

Warriors wounded in one phase will remain wounded until the end of the battle, and their level of health is maintained from one phase to another, although skill in "First Aid" can help restore some of their health between phases. After each phase, you will have the option to leave the battlefield, but you will not be able to collect trophies from the enemies who have been killed.

New soldiers will appear on the battlefield over the course of the battle, to reinforce those troops which have suffered losses.

A Battle Phase ends when all the troops of one of the parties, including their reinforcements, are finally broken (that is, lying dead or unconscious). The battle itself ends when all the soldiers on one side have been killed or wounded.

If you are at a considerable distance from the enemy after the battle begins, you can at any time press the *Tab* key and retreat. However, note that your forces can suffer casualties while they are retreating. It is wiser to flee the field only if the situation becomes completely hopeless.

Battle Groups

As the leader of your party, you will be able to command your soldiers during a battle. To begin, select the group you wish to command:

- **Key 1:** *all units on the field, regardless of the troop type.*
- **Key 2:** *all archers and foot soldiers who are not yet engaged in melee combat.*
- **Key 3:** *all infantry who are currently engaged in melee with the enemy.*
- **Key 4:** *all cavalry units.*
- **Key 5:** *all companions – any hero characters in your party.*

You can also combine groups for ease of management:

- *If you hold down the Ctrl key and press the number key, then you combine that group with the one that was previously selected. For example, if you want to assign both infantry and archers to a combat group, the first press 3, then press Ctrl + 2.*
- *Press 6 to select all the soldiers who are not currently included in the selected group.*

After selecting a group of soldiers, you can give them commands:

- **F1** – *Hold position. Order your troops to stay within a short distance of where they are currently standing. They will fire with long-range weapons if they have them, but they will not join the melee until the enemy comes close enough. This command is useful if you want your units to defend a piece of land. For example, if your party consists mainly of infantry, they can stand on a steep slope and defend against enemy cavalry.*
- **F2** – *Follow me. Your men will fall in around you, and remain as close as possible.*
- **F3** – *Charge! Order your men to break ranks and pursue the enemy individually.*
- **F4** – *Dismount / mount up. Order your men to get off their horses and fight on their feet, if for example the terrain is inconvenient for mounted combat. You can give the same command a second time to cancel the dismount order. Your cavalry will then mount their horses once more. If any horse has lost the owner, it will go to someone who knows how to ride.*
- **F5** – *Open fire / cease fire. Order your shooters open fire or cease firing upon the enemy. When approaching the enemy, shooters will automatically enter melee, if they have an appropriate weapon.*
- **F6** – *Take ten steps forward. Order your units to move ten paces in the direction of the enemy, and hold position there.*

- **F7** – *Take ten steps backwards. Order your units to retreat ten paces and hold position there.*
- **F8** – *Close ranks. Order your men to reduce the distance between them. This command is especially useful in preparing the infantry for a cavalry charge.*
- **F9** – *Disperse. Order your units to move away from each other. This command is useful when charging enemy archers or crossbowmen.*

Defeat

Sometimes the enemy is simply too strong. Any defeat comes with consequences – and such consequences can range from completely catastrophic to mildly unpleasant. If you did not go into battle yourself, but sent your men ahead, then when they are defeated the enemy will almost certainly attempt to attack you. If you personally went into battle and were defeated but you still have troops in your party in fighting condition, they will drag you out and patch you up as best they can. At that point, you can choose to flee or to engage the enemy once more. If your troops were defeated, your horse was killed, and you've taken a club to the helmet, then all of your property goes to the winner, any of your surviving forces are captured, and you will be sent to the slave pits.

Victory

If on the other hand your forces are victorious, you will be able to take what your defeated enemies had in their possession. Note that you may have to share these with your allies, if you had any, according to the relative strength of your force with respect to theirs.

First, you can take any unconscious enemies as prisoners. They can be sold into slavery, or can be recruited to join your party. Noble captives can be offered for ransom. The number of enemies you capture alive depends on the popularity of maces and clubs in your party: regular use of mace and other blunt weapons considerably increases the chances that the enemy will be stunned rather than killed. All equipment and goods held by the enemy will also be seized by your forces. You yourself will take away a only part of the spoils, as your soldiers have a legitimate claim to the division of the spoils. The greatest trophy is the combat experience. As commander you will receive the most experience, while a lower percentage will be distributed to the heroes in your service. Hired troops will receive a small amount of experience as well.

Other Parties

Your party is not the only one in the world. During your travels, you will meet many others. Some will treat you kindly, some will be hostile, and some will pay you little mind at all. If instead of a city or other location on the map, you click the left mouse button on any other party, your whole troop will follow them.

Each troop has a color that indicates their faction, and the number above the party indicates how many units it is composed of. If there is another number (for example, "+8"), this indicates the number of captives this party has taken. To receive more information about any group, simply hold your cursor over it. For example, the inscription "33/38 + 6" means that of a force of 38 people, only 33 are active (and five wounded), and this group has taken six prisoners.

The distance at which you'll detect the other party depends on the "Spotting" skill of your squad. If you have developed this skill well, then you will be able to see the enemy first, and this will give you an advantage in battle. Night makes it more difficult to track other parties, which can make thing harder for you ~ and for your enemies.

If someone in your party has the "Tracking" skill, then colored arrows will appear in various places on the ground. These trace the movement of a party that recently passed through the area. The arrows indicate the direction in which the group was moving. The color reflects how old the trail is (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet), while the size of the arrows corresponds to the size of the group. For more information, hover your cursor on the trail, and if the "Tracking" skill of your party is well developed, you can see how many people were in the party, and even who or what kind of troops they were.

Speed

The speed of your movement over the world map depends on six factors:

- **The size of the party.** *The more troops in the party, the slower it will move.*
- **The types of fighters in the party.** *Mounted soldiers move faster than foot soldiers, and if your entire squad is made up of riders, their movement is considerably higher. Please note that the rate of movement over the map is not affected by the breed of your horses, but only the riding ability of the riders. The movement speed of foot soldiers is determined by their "Athletics" skill, which means that elite troops move faster than new recruits. Your party's speed of movement*

over the map falls somewhere between the slowest unit in the party and the average speed of all the party's units.

- **Encumbrance.** *If you are hauling a significant amount of bulky goods, or are simply carrying a lot of gear, it would be wisest to buy a few cheap horses which can be loaded with luggage. Pack animals can greatly increase the speed of your squad.*
- **The type of terrain and the weather.** *Detachment moves faster on level ground and in the daytime. At night or in the forest, movement speed is reduced.*
- **The morale of the detachment.** *The happier your soldiers, the more energetically they will move.*
- **Skills.** *For each point of your "Path-finding" party skill, the speed of your team will increase by 3%.*

Sometimes your speed over the land can be a matter of life and death – but of course this depends on the type of party you are commanding. If you do not have soldiers who are capable of standing strong against all comers, it is better to move as quickly as possible. Ideally, your team should be strong enough to attack, while remaining fast enough to escape superior enemy forces.

Battles and Sieges

If you will compete for fame and wealth, prepare your troops for many battles. War demands extraordinary training – and you must be confident in the fighting skills and strength of your party.

Types and Characteristics of Weapons

In each weapon category there are a number of specific weapons, and if you have developed your ability in handling this type of weapon, then you can use any one of them effectively. What type of weapons to choose is up to you, but some items require special training.

One-Handed weapon

These offer the best mix of striking power and attack speed, and let you use a shield for improved defense. Some weapons have extremely limited reach, such as daggers or hatchets. These generally also do not allow you to parry due to their small size.

Two-handed weapon

These weapons boast greater range, and greater damage as well. Better on the attack than defense, most of these weapons require but one or two hits to flatten an opponent, but you lose the advantage of a shield. The most remarkable two-handed weapon is the claymore. He has a great radius of destruction and its impact can be deadly, but it has the limitation that it can only be used from a horse.

Pole arms

Such weapons are very long, and give their owner a significant advantage over an enemy whose weapons have a shorter range. Most such weapons are capable of breaking shields as well.

Bows

A bow can hit a target at long range. The firing speed of arrows is much faster than firearms, and if you develop the "Power Draw" skill, then the amount of damage you can deal, compared with a firearm, is not greatly diminished either. Exceptional bows can only be used if you possess a minimum "Power Draw" skill.

Firearms

These are ideal weapons for those who prefer to fight from a distance, but have no wish to trouble themselves with archery. Firearms need to manually reload after each shot, which you can do by pressing the attack button a second time. Most firearms cannot be used while mounted on a horse.

Double-barreled weapons are a variant of such weapons. Their main advantage is their ability to fire two shots in a row, but naturally for this advantage you must pay with a longer reloading time. While you are reloading a Double-Barreled weapon, you cannot move or the attempt to reload will fail.

Grenades

This weapon is quite unique, in that it allows you to fight from a distance and take our several enemies at once. These weapons vary in size, which corresponds to the amount of damage they are capable of.

Injuries

There are three types of injuries:

- **Slashing.** *This applies to sharp blades, such as swords and axes. Slashing weapons cause the most damage.*
- **Stabbing.** *Applies to weapons with a pointed edge, such as spears, stabbing swords, and arrows. Stabbing weapons penetrate armor better.*
- **Blunt.** *Applied to weapons such as clubs and hammers, which beat and crush, while not causing open wounds. Crushing damage can also be caused by horse, when the beast tramples the enemy. Such injuries can strike the enemy unconscious without killing him – and are therefore ideal for subduing enemies to be taken prisoner. Alongside stabbing weapons, blunt weapons are powerful against well-armored opponents.*

If you have enabled "Show damage," then every time you inflict or suffer a hit, the damage inflicted or sustained will be displayed on screen. This can be very instructive.

The amount of damage a weapon can inflict depends on several factors. First, of course, it depends on the damage index of the weapon. This varies from between half the index to the given maximum. For example, if a staff can cause a maximum of 20 units of damage, then each stroke might deliver anywhere between 10 to 20 units of damage. If you are

expert in a weapon's use, you will more often strike towards the weapon's maximum damage. Other skills also increase the damage you can inflict. The "Power Strike" skill increases the damage inflicted by melee weapons, while "Power Draw / Grenade Throwing" increases the damage of long-range weapons.

The game "With Fire and Sword" uses a physics model which takes into account the speed and direction of your weapon, as well as the speed and direction of your opponent when calculating damage. The effect of this calculation will be reported to you as a speed bonus. If you're sidestepping left past an enemy, you'll do more damage if you strike right to left (opposite their motion relative to you), than if you strike left to right. Most weapons will do more damage in the middle of their stroke than at the beginning or end: jabbing somebody with a spear is more effective if you've got some weight behind it than if the point runs into them immediately. Your speed bonus can be positive (extra damage) or negative (less damage), even to the point of doubling your hit or negating it entirely.

Speed bonuses are extremely important for ranged weapons. During flight the missile quickly loses its initial momentum, and consequently will inflict less damage the further it travels.

Where you hit the target can have an effect as well. You will hit where you're looking, to a degree. To try for the feet, aim low; to hit the head, aim high. Blows to the feet will generally do less damage, and blows to the head will do more.

The armor of the target reduces the damage that is inflicted. After factoring in your weapon's rating, your skills, and the speed of impact, the game produces a number which is referred to as your "base" damage. Armor then reduces this damage, by first subtracting a value and then reducing it further by some percentage. In the case of a slashing attack, the damage is reduced from anywhere between half to the maximum defensive value of the armor; if the attack is stabbing or crushing, then the damage is reduced by a quarter to a half of the defensive value of the armor. For example, if the protection of armor is 20 and it is protecting you from a slashing stroke, the damage you sustain will be 10-20 units lower. If the enemy were using a stabbing or crushing weapon, the damage sustained will be 5-10 units lower. In addition to direct protection from damage, the armor also gives additional protection as a percentage of the total damage sustained.

Melee Combat

In close combat you will be wise to master blocking with your shield or your weapon. Pay close attention to the state of your shield, because even the strongest shield can withstand only a limited number of strikes.

If you have no shield, then you shall have to fend off the attacks of the enemy by using the Right Mouse Button to block with your weapon. Blocking with a weapon can only block one type of stroke at a time, like an overhead chop, or a slash from the side. Also, it has no effect on missile weapons. In order to block an attack, it is necessary to closely watch the enemy and identify which kind of swing he is preparing – and then immediately maneuver to block the attack.

Usually it takes a short amount of time to prepare the attack, and you shall want to choose your attacks wisely, so as to circumvent the protection of the enemy, whether that be a shield or a weapon. Attacking randomly is likely to lead to failure. Rather, the key to victory is patience. Wait until the enemy lowers his shield or steps back – then step forward and strike.

Ranged Combat

Archers and units equipped with firearms cannot use shields, since they must hold their weapons with two hands. In order to shoot long ranged weapons, face the target and hold down the left mouse button. A sight will appear on the screen – a large white ring, which will gradually shrink. If you are prepared to shoot, then release the left mouse button at the moment when the ring shrinks to its minimum size. If you wait too long, you will grow tired of pulling back the bow, and your hands will begin to tremble. In order to get yourself more time to aim, you might wish to develop your skills at shooting with bows. When using firearms and grenades, you can target the enemy for as long as you wish, because there is no need to keep the bowstring stretched.

When throwing grenades, mind the arc of the throw – that is, the farther you are from the enemy, the higher you shall need to aim in order to reach the enemy. You can hold down the Shift key to see a useful approximation of where the grenade will hit. This can help you adjust its arc so it will land where you want. Grenades fly far slower than arrows and bullets, and fly along a much higher arc. Also, their range is far less.

If you shoot an arrow at an enemy who is holding a shield, and he can see you, he may simply duck behind the shield so your arrow cannot harm

him. True, the shield can eventually be broken down by continuous arrow shots, but this will generally take a large number of arrows. Breaking shields is far easier with a two-handed sword or an axe.

The invention of firearms influenced the development of new tactical maneuver for archers – the so-called linear formation. Firearms required a long time to reload, but at the same time a volley from several shooters could inflict significant losses on the enemy. Shooters are better placed on hills, which gives a tactical advantage over enemy troops below.

Fighting with a Lance

Lances and most other kinds of pole arms can be used from horseback in a special kind of attack. This involves getting up to a sufficiently high speed, "couching" your weapon (grasping it firmly under your arm), then running it through an enemy. This type of attack can deliver tremendous damage, but it can be tricky to execute.

First you must have a horse that is capable of a modest speed; don't try lancing from the back of a lame mule. A high Agility is also a desirable trait for your horse since it makes it easier to maneuver for and land your hit.

Also, you will obviously need a pole arm. Lances, spears, military forks, and many more are all suitable weapons. A longer weapon is usually more desirable than a shorter one that does higher damage, because it means you can hit the enemy before he can take a swing at you (or your horse).

As you are approaching the enemy, DO NOT CLICK THE ATTACK BUTTON! The lancing attack is automatic, provided you have enough speed and a suitable weapon. You need to turn your horse as you come upon the enemy so that your weapon's point impales them.

Fighting from Horseback

When striking at a person on foot while wielding one- or two-handed weapons (not pole arms), the best tactic is to slash at them just as you are passing and not when they're still slightly ahead of you. Two-handed melee weapons can only be used with one hand when you are riding horseback, and this results in speed and damage penalties. Pole arms from horseback work a little differently, in that when you ready your weapon for a thrust, you can aim it anywhere you like with the mouse.

You can trample enemies with a horse, which is extremely useful. Horses deal "blunt" damage whenever they hit an enemy on foot with sufficient speed, so you can knock enemies unconscious by trampling them. If they are carrying a shield, you can hit them with your horse's shoulder to make them stagger, and slash at them before they can get their shield back up. Note that this doesn't work well against foot soldiers with pole arms, because they can get a hit at your horse before they are knocked down. If your horse takes a strong hit in the chest with a pole arm, you will be halted, which can prove to be very dangerous if you're surrounded.

Facing Mounted Opponents

It is all well and good to learn about running down infantrymen, but what if that infantryman happens to be you? The greatest strength of a war horse is its speed. Therefore, when you face a mounted opponent it is best to make use of the features of the terrain. Gullies, steep hills, and cliffs will impede the horse and slow it down, and it is ideal to engage mounted opponents in the woods or in shallow water.

Equally important, when facing this threat, is the use of pole arms. After sustaining a powerful blow of a spear to the chest, a horse will stop and may even fall. The hardest part is timing: you want to have your



weapon at full extension at the same time as the horse runs into it, for maximum damage and safety. If you wait too long, your spear won't be in a position to hit the horse before you're run over, or the horse will be stopped close enough that the rider can still chop at you with their weapon. If you thrust too soon, your strike will be wasted, the horse won't stop, and you'll be flattened.

Fortifications

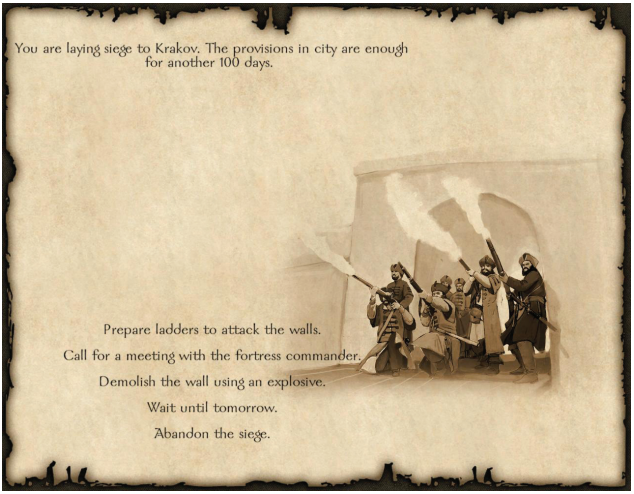
If you are being pursued by an army numerically superior to your own, and a friendly fortress is not within reach, you might wish to set up camp and build fortifications – protective structures improvised from your carts and other materials. It is no easy task to improvise such structures in great haste, but they enable a skillful military commander to save many of his men, and make his attackers incur heavy losses – and may even convince the enemy that you are not quite worth the trouble. But beware: if you are chasing an enemy, they too can build fortifications, especially if the army is smaller than your force, or has a large number of shooters or archers.

To attack such structures headlong can be suicide, especially if the defending forces have capable gunmen or archers. But these improvised fortifications are quite vulnerable from the rear – an important consideration for both attackers and defenders. To defeat the enemy hiding inside one of these structures, it is wise to rapidly move your troops behind the enemy lines, or take a hill around the rear of the structure, if the terrain allows it. Then, with the help of your best archers and gunmen, pick off the defenders one by one.

Siege

After gathering a large army, you can attempt to besiege one of the cities of your enemies. When you decide on the siege of the city, or fortress, would need to choose one of the following:

- **Prepare ladders for the assault.** *You can attack an enemy fortress with ladders, but remember that you are likely to suffer significant losses from the enemy archers posted on the walls. Therefore, the front line of the charge is best peopled with strong soldiers equipped with strong armor and shields. Once you take the wall, turn the tide by placing your own your archers on its heights, and take out any enemy reinforcements. The time required for constructing the ladders depends on your "Engineering" skill.*



- **Call for parlay.** *It may be that the enemy is exhausted and ready to surrender – or perhaps a self-serving captain will accept a bribe and open the gates for your forces. Either way, it might prove useful to negotiate.*
- **Poison the city,s water.** *If you're willing to do anything to win, you might try poisoning the city's water supply. True, it's not a particularly ethical action, but it will significantly reduce the forces defending the city.*
- **Use explosives to demolish a wall.** *For a good engineer, fortress walls are not so solid an obstacle. A little powder mixed with a little skill can result in a tremendous hole in the wall. The wall blown to bits, you can mobilize your forces and charge the enemy.*
- **Wait until tomorrow.** *Time always favors the besiegers. A little more time, and your enemy may surrender, especially if their supplies are running out.*
- **Lift the siege.** *If you determine that you cannot take the fortress, you can lift the siege and continue your campaign.*

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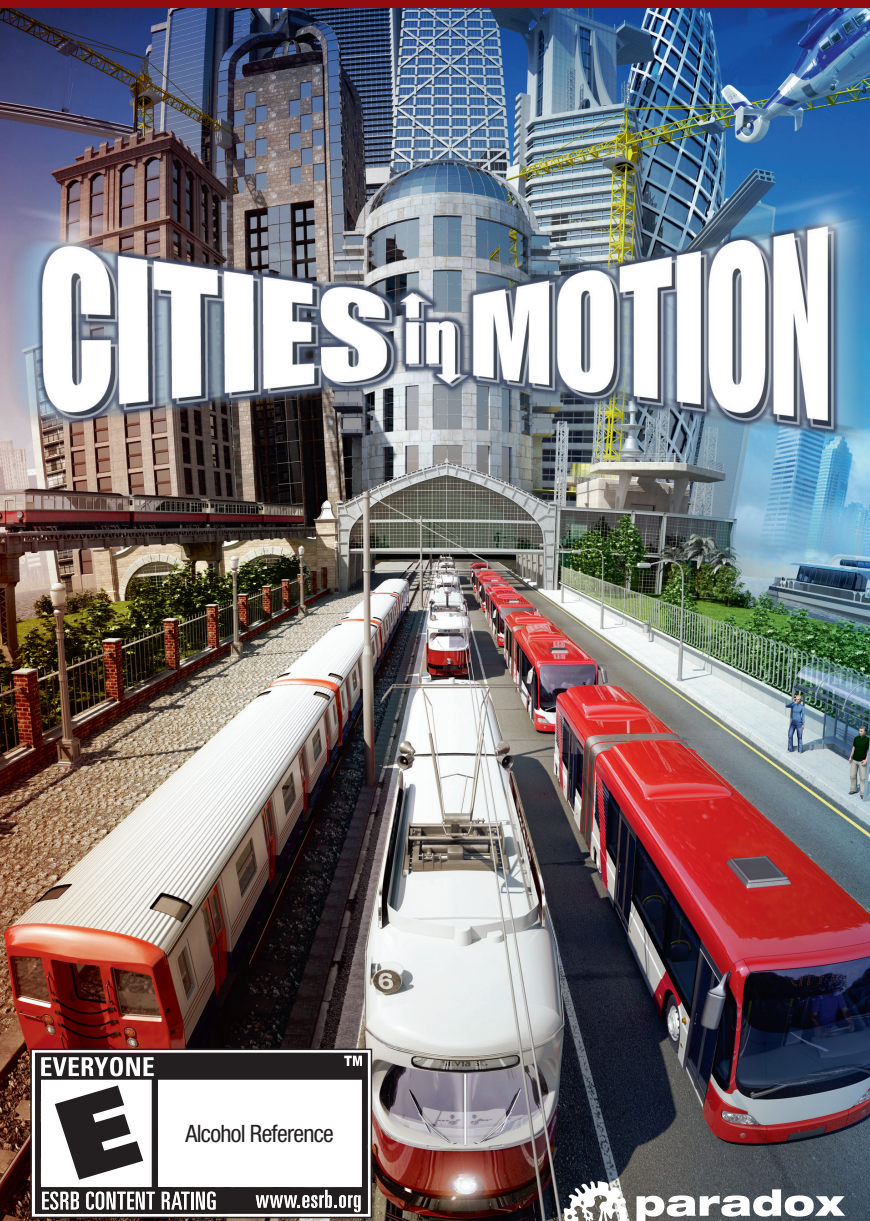
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