Conflict: Desert Storm

Multiplayer Information

- Internet play: untested
- LAN play: yes
- Lobby search: yes
- Direct IP: no
- Play via GameRanger: no
- Coop: no
- Singleplayer campaign: yes
- Hotseat: no

Overview

Desert Storm is a first/third person shooter, developed by Pivotal Games and released by Square Enix on 13.9.2002. The player controls a team of up to four soldiers, each having a special training background and therefore competences. These four are:

1. Squad Leader,
2. Sniper,
3. Weapons Specialist and
4. Infiltration Specialist.

These four characters can be controlled either directly, in a first person or third person shooter manner. You can also give other team members (characters) orders, such as taking a position, following the current team member or hold their fire. It is possible to switch those characters by pressing the keys 1 to 4. So you can play any character of the team. Characters not currently played by the player himself are controlled by an AI. It is essential to use the special abilities of all four squad members in combination properly in order to achieve various missions.

The theme of this game is the gulf war, the so-called »Operation Desert Storm« (hence the name). Therefore the 15 missions are placed in Iraq during the gulf war. The player can pick either the US Delta Force or the British Special Forces SAS. Gameplay wise this decision does not really matter as both consist essentially of the very same characters with other skins and names. Aside from that they play the same way.

The game is part of the Conflict Series, incl. its immediate successor, Conflict: Desert Storm 2.

Minimum System Requirements

The original CD version requires the following:

- Operating System: Windows 98/ME/2000/XP,

- CPU: Pentium II / 400 MHz,
- RAM: 128 MB RAM and
- 8x CD-ROM drive.

The game is known to work on a Pentium III with 866 MHz, a Riva TNT2 graphics card and 128 MB RAM. But the game experience improves massively by using more RAM and of course a real graphics acceleration card. So the above specifications are really the bare minimum, when playing on a graphics resolution of 640×480.

GOG and Steam list the requirements as follows:

- Operating System: Windows XP or Vista,
- CPU: 1.8 GHz,
- RAM: 512 MB
- Graphics Card: 3D graphics card compatible with DirectX 7 (compatible with DirectX 9 recommended) and
- HDD: 2 GB.

This setup ensures good game play when playing with normal resolutions up to 1280×960.

Compatibility Issues

The Steam version lists the compatibility only for Windows XP or Windows Vista while GOG extends it up to Windows 7 and 8. The original CD version runs well on Windows 98, ME, 2000 and XP as well as Windows Vista and 7. In general it does not run well on Windows 10. Not running well in this case means specifically, that there are certain parts on the maps, that immobilize the player permanently. In missions with at least two controllable characters this can often be overcome by sending the affected team member to another location. In this case the AI takes over movement and somehow frees itself from this position, whereas the player has no chance of doing that himself. But there are known incidences where the character is stuck permanently, so that the mission essentially cannot be played to its end. Therefore it is best not to play DS on Windows 10.

The game does not allow to use wide screen resolutions. Only automatically derived 4:3 resolutions are made available to the player.

Purchase

The game can still be bought via Steam and https://www.gog.com/game/conflict_desert_storm. However the game is not suitable for Windows 10 in any version, neither the original CD version nor the current download versions of GOG or Steam.

Hints

There are several peculiarities in this game, that are not so obvious. Here is a selection of them:

Stealth

All your soldiers gain experience and can be decorated for special services done to their country. A way of speeding this up is by killing soldiers with stealth. This can be done by one of the following three ways:

1. Kill the soldier with your silencer pistol (Bradley),
2. kill the soldier with your silenced MP5 (Jones) or
3. kill the soldier with a knife.

All three of them require to be not spotted before firing/hitting and in case of the fire arms, require a clean kill with the first hit (aim for the head). Note: It is *not* required, that nobody else near the target as spotted you. There are incidences where you kill a soldier standing right next to another but still gain the experience, as the killed one did not have his attention on you.

SCUD Rockets

There are some missions, where one of your objectives is to destroy SCUD rocket launchers. Despite the opposing in-game statements you do not require a bazooka or C4 or mines to destroy them. A simple grenade will suffice, when thrown near enough to it. This works also with your team leader's grenade launcher. Warning: Although it might be tempting to close in on the rocket launchers and safely throw the grenade (this way it is more difficult to miss), it is not advised. The damage dealt by the subsequent explosion has a far greater radius than any normal grenade would have and even more than taking down a tank with a bazooka. Another solution for SCUDs whose launch is imminent, it using the sniper rifle. After a few shots they will blow up as well.

SAM Rockets

On some missions you will encounter SAM stations (Soil Air Missiles). They can be destroyed by gun fire. But the most effective way is to use the sniper rifle in particular. It only requires one hit on any part of the actual rocket.

Mine Fields

Mine fields will blow up when walking through them. Usually most of the mines will be gone after such a blow event. A cheaper way than blowing up a soldier is using a grenade to initiate the detonation. Be cautious! There still might be some left-overs after that. Also note, that such explosions will alarm surrounding enemy soldiers.

Anti Air Tanks

In some missions there are anti air tanks placed on the map, which usually you are to destroy. You can of course do this with bazookas. But a far more cheap way is shooting at their »dishes« with your sniper character. After two hits with a sniper rifle anti air tanks will blow.

C4/Mines

You might come into situations, where you run out of bazookas for destroying tanks. (Usually that means you overlooked a weapons cache somewhere.) If the tank is moving, it might be a good idea to let Jones lay his mine(s). You have two of them and a moving tank usually moves away, so that there is no line of sight. As long as it cannot spot you, you will have time to lay the mine. So observe its pattern and look for spots that the tank will traverse and that are covered long enough for you to lay your mine. If you run out of both, you can even use C4 for the same job (but of course you will have to trigger C4 in the right moment manually).

When facing a stationary tank, mines will not be an option. But C4 still might. In such a case, throw a smoke grenade next to the tank to block the tanks sight and lay the C4. If you have time enough you can retreat to a safe location. If not, throw a second smoke grenade and retreat then. Be aware: If you are standing right next to a stationary tank, it will likely not fire. But if you keep enough distance, it will. So when placing the C4, make sure you are right next to it. Otherwise it might cut the attempt a bit short… If you are very desperate, you can also lay the C4 and blow up your solder along with it, as long as you have team members left to revive him.

Also note: C4 packages are detonated in the order in which they were layed. So when laying several C4 charges in a series without blowing them up right after that, you can trigger them later, but always just one at a time. This can be particularly helpful to trigger certain mission events only after taking a more secure position. (Very often the destruction of a certain element of the map as part of a missions objective will trigger some sort of event, which usually will activate waves of enemy units, including tanks or helicopters.) But keep that in mind, when trying to blow up a tank with C4.

Special Hint: The anti tank mine may be declared as an anti tank weapon, but just like the enemy mines, yours can also be used to mine entrances, exits and other narrow points in order to kill enemy soldiers (anti person mine).

Anti Air vs. Anti Tank weapons

There are three different bazooka-like weapons in the game. Two are meant for destroying tanks, one is meant for helicopters. While you can destroy everything with the green bazooka and after two direct hits, everything with the cone-tip LAW bazookas, this goes *not* for the slimmer anti air weapon. This one cannot destroy tanks. It works particularly well for helicopters (compared with the anti tank weapons) as it fires immediately, whereas the anti tank weapons take a moment to actually fire after pulling the trigger.

Air Strike

There are missions, where you can order air strikes. They are done by marking targets with a laser marker and after successfully marking them, waiting for the air strike. If by any chance you try to order an air strike and it does not happen/mark, make sure you have taken out any anti air units. Otherwise the pilot will (understandably) refuse to go in.

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Artillery Strike

There is one mission, where you can call artillery strikes. The artillery strikes can be distinguished by the tool you are handed. While the air strike looks more like some sort of a camera, the artillery looks more like a telephone receiver. Note: Artillery strikes will cover a lot more area, so keep covered after calling for one.

Network Play

The PC version of the game does not offer a coop mode for the campaign but (team-)deathmatch maps which can be played on the local network.

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