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READ ME FIRST: TIPS FOR CREATING MAPS

Before submitting a Mappack:

Once you are ready to submit a mappack, you need to make sure that the header information includes the number of players in each map. Then include in a zip file the .dat and .hdr along with a mappack.txt file. (.ver not needed)

How to make Mappack.txt:

It used to have to be written exactly line by line manually, but now there is a program by Brandon that can do it automatically for you. Just remember, the mappacks are case sensitive. So make sure it's all .dat and not .DAT or something like that. **Brandon's Mappack Manager**

How to make a Mappack

A Mappack is a group of 12 maps or less, usually made around a certain style that makes them all similar though not always. A Map is, of course, a playable level.

To make a map you would use a Map making tool. A Good map usually makes use of a combination of what is available. Although it is possible to make a map without the tools, even with the knowledge of the **Hex** values this can be a daunting task.

Known Map Making Tools:

WILDMAN
PRODUCTIONS
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ALACN made the first Editor. It's current version is useful for making manual changes to landscape, placing objects, changing available spells and buildings, and changing map textures. All in a stable 3D environment.

ALACN's "Populous World Editor" can be found on **ALACN's Populous Page**.

Update: ALACN's Website has been down. An alternate download link has been found **here**.

Koen made the First Editor capable of generating smooth landscape. For the first time ever, maps are not so rigid and open to many new possibilities. With this editor you can also produce random landscape, and set random Trees and Wildmen. A remarkable time saving tool.

Koen's Level Editor can be found **here**.

TedTycoon made the "Symmetry Tool". It loads a map, and Mirrors landscape and/or objects. This helps for making symmetrical maps for use in 2 or 4 player maps though not so useful in 3 player maps. It is also useful for making new maps, running symmetry many times to see what patterns you can come up with. A known limitation is in the way it places objects. Usually off by a single space. This may not seem like much at first, but it is never good to have trees on slopes or uneven object positions compared to other tribes, so after using this tool it is always important to manually check the objects on your maps with another tool. Another limitation is that when setting Land Bridge effects, the symmetry tool will not Mirror the end point.

TedTycoon's Symmetry tool can be found at **Populous: Return of the Spies**.

(TedTycoon and Khickman are also working on a new Map Editor that will soon be available on the same site. Details **here**. This much anticipated project is 66% complete as of Wednesday 19th, April, 2006.)

Update: The site appears down at the moment so this project was probably never finished.

Notes : Known Mapmaker Bugs

1. A rare conflict may occur when using a combination of the 3 editors. This conflict, if it occurs, will show up when trying to load a map that has been saved in one or both of the other editors into ALACN's Editor. It will say, "Error Loading Mappack." and it will not load the map at all. It will still load into the other two mapmaker's but no matter how many times you save it, ALACN's Editor will show it as corrupt. A simple solution will be to load the map into TedTycoon's Symmetry Tool, and saving it with a new name. This will solve the problem everytime.

2. When using ALACN's Editor, on occasion, depending on your video card, Video Drivers, and Operating system, you may experience a problem where, in the middle of a task, your computer just reboots. There is no known solution to this problem. And yes, it can get very annoying as it happens to me often.

Tips for mappacks

1. Before you start making mappacks you should consider looking at other user's mappacks.
2. Make sure you do not make a copy of a map from another mappack.
3. Try making original and creative mappacks rather than a new version of old mappacks.

Tips for maps

1. Think about the strategy of the maps. Make maps stable (all players get same chances), or if you want an unstable map (for example when one player needs to rescue the other) make the chances for each side the same.
2. Trees are a valuable source. Changing the number of trees you place can be a big difference to the strategy. For example, when players get a big land but no trees, surviving will be harder than when there are many trees.
3. Think about strategic positions. Do you want them to be high (uneasy to capture) or low (easier to capture)? Do you want them to be unreachable in the beginning of the game (like the volcano in craters), or do you want to have a fight about it in the whole game (the hill in face off)?

Map Limitations

There are a few known limitations to making a multiplayer map.

1. Aside from the Shaman, the only people that may be placed are the wildmen. All other units, on game load, will render as wildmen. The only braves you can get are either from the wildmen placed just around the Shaman, or if you want them away from the Shaman, to place a Convert Effect over them. Make sure the Convert Effect is made for the correct tribe color, and do not tie a trigger to it if you want them to appear on game load. No other type of person but the above mentioned may exist in a multiplayer game on game load. This limitation does not exist in a single player map.

2. Number of Shaman. While it is possible to have more than one Shaman of a single player in a map, only one may cast spells. When the one who casts spells dies, the other one then is able to cast spells. Reincarnation is then instant, but in short games you will only after have one Shaman at any given time after the others have died. It has been observed that the second shaman will return occasionally but it is unknown under what conditions this occurs. It can be interesting to try, though not advisable when working with prisons. This limitation also exists in single player maps.

3. No Shaman. You might also choose to give a tribe no shaman. If you do, there would be no reincarnation site. So you would have to set an effect: convert of the color you want the braves to be on the wildies.

4. Setting Multiple shamans in one space. You can put two or more shamans in the same spot, which will result in a fused reincarnation site, but if you do there tends to be a problem as someone might not be able to set buildings. To solve this, give the shamans at least a few squares space. If they are interlocked, there will be a build limit but it should be even at some point.

5. Prisons. When making a prison, avoid making it the same color as your Shaman. If you do this, your own braves will be unable to destroy it. This means either your enemy will have to destroy it, or your ally, if you have one. And don't count on any help from the enemy. This is true in both single player and multiple maps. Another thing to consider is that your reincarnation site would be where the shaman is in prison, so you would need to use an effect: convert,

color of tribe, to have your braves places where you want.

6. In making landscapes, be aware that when the game loads it will not be exactly as would appear in most editors. For example, a wall on water would give a bit of land around it. This may or may not be a problem in some strategies. In most cases, it is a problem if part of the walkway that forms is not accessible. This could cause a brave told to go somewhere to stand idle (arms in air) and possibly cause many followers to die. This can also happen if you place trees on the sides of cliffs where trees cannot be reached, or on a higher elevation that cannot be accessed.

7. Large Maps are more often subject to game crashes and resynch issues than small maps. If you set allot of land, with allot of variations in elevations, it will probably cause problems in the game. Likewise, too many objects also cause problems in running the game. It is not clearly known how many is too much, but as an example, multiple firestorm effects going off at once has been known to cause problems. While multiple timed tornado effects even caused the RAM to overload and computers to crash.

8. Setting Multiple Guest Spells to be given in a single map is not a good idea. While the object may work to give a spell if multiple different guest spells are chosen, only one guest spell will actually be given. When trying to have a single object give multiple of the same spell is usually doesn't seem to work at all. (Guest Spells include Teleport, Bloodlust, Armageddon)

9. When setting an object to give a spell, there are two ways to do this. In ALACN's editor, choosing Discovery, and in it's options Permanent > Spell, will result in a Vault of Knowledge. Vaults work in multiplayer maps, but can cause Synch issues so ill advised. One of the only advantages of choosing a vault is that multiple shaman's have a different worship bar. So each Shaman needs to sit for the full charge. Also, multiple can worship it at the same time, even if there is only one occurrence. However, for the Synch issues, it is better to instead give a Spell by choosing Spell, not a Discovery.

Stone Heads and effects

One of the most challenging aspects of map making can be setting of effects. Setting one wrong can cause one to not work at all, or worse, crash the entire

game. It is important to know the details. I have found it easier to set them in ALACN's editor, so the explanation will be based on that editor. In making a multiplayer map, all such objects should be set as Neutral.

How to set a stone head, Obelisk, or Statue to AOD:

1. Create New Object. Set it as Neutral, select general, and then choose stone head.

2. Create new object. Set as Neutral, general, trigger. The settings of trigger can be a bit complicated to figure at first, but it is easy to get used to.

*** Important: Make sure the trigger is placed directly on the same space as the stone head. A Stone head without a trigger has been known to cause the entire game to end the moment it begins. ***

Trigger settings:

The First setting is type, from a Drop down. This is where you choose what kind of object the stone head will be. For now I will only discuss the selections relating to Stone Heads.

Shaman Proximity, and Shaman AOD act the same. They can only be worshiped by the Shaman. But they look different. Shaman Proximity will make an Obelisk, while Shaman AOD will make an Angel of Death Statue. (not that it does not have to make an angel of death to use the angel of death statue.)

I am not Familiar with Library, though I believe it is also an item which only the Shaman can Worship.

Proximity will make either a Stone Head, or a Totem, depending on how many people are set to worship it.

Cell Radius: This should be 1

Pray Time: This Determines how long it will take to worship. 200 to 300 usually works for my maps.

Occurences: This determines how many times the object can be worshipped before it sinks into the

ground. 0 is infinite, while -1 is infinite but will only allow it to go off one at a time (useful to use -1 when wanting to avoid Synch issues).

Inactive Time: I am not totally sure on this one. I usually set it to 1. But I believe this relates to how long it can be left alone before the prayer count will go down.

Trigger Count: This determined how many persons can worship it at a time. If you choose a type where only the Shaman can worship it, the number must be set to 1. If it is Proximity, you can set it higher. Not that the more people required, the harder it will be for 1 follower to worship it.

Links: Click this to open an additional window. Then select the object you want to be activated by the worship, and it will only appear when that trigger is activated. Note that a maximum of 12 objects may be tied to one trigger, but you may have as many triggers to one stone head as you want (which is good to know if you want more than 12 effects.) You also don't have to get a spell or effect from it. You can also have a building or a building upgrade or even a tree linked. You can also have one object linked by multiple triggers. If there is an object not linked though, it will appear when the game starts.

Simply put: To link an object to a trigger, you need the links window open which is opened from the Trigger Options. Then, with that window open, you need to select the object to link then click to link. (very simple)

At the bottom of the Trigger options are 2 check boxes. With stone head objects, you want to leave "start inactive" alone. But always select "Create player owned" - an example of what happens if you don't? Say you chose an Angel of Death effect. Since the trigger is Neutral, unless you set create player owned, it will spawn as Neutral. So you could end up with a Neutral grey angel eating everyone.

Note: Create player owned is basically a way to tell the game that the color who worships it, is the color to make the effects. Without this checked, it will create it at whatever color the trigger is, which should be Neutral.

Other effects:

Another interesting type of effect is called a Timed Effect, which you may select from the Trigger options

Drop down. These are very interesting and very hard to work with. In this case, you will need to experiment. Pray time is what you will want to use here, to determine how long of a time. Under Occurrences, the number determines how many times it repeats, and if you choose a -1 it can be infinite. You can also have a trigger link another trigger. Though very difficult, the outcome can be rewarding. Such as, an effect: landbridge might cross the distance after a time, then an effect: velly might cause it to disappear. Experiment and and you will have allot of fun with timed effects.

A Word of caution though. I once had an experience where I tried having a tornado timed. Since tornado lasts a period of time, after a period of time, there were so many tornados at once the computer made a long beep which meant the RAM was overloaded, and the computer had to restarted. Make sure you don't let too much happen at once to avoid this fatal mistake.

Setting effects/spells:

Though not much needs to be said about setting triggers, setting spells can be difficult. Because there is more than one place to choose them in ALACN's editor. To set a spell, it is best to choose in a new object "Neutral" , "General", "Discovery" - in it's options you can choose from 3 drop downs.

Permanent, Level, Once.

In the second Drop down:

Spell, Mana, Building.

From here, you might choose to give someone an Angel of Death spell. If it is a one time thing, it will appear to be cast. Or maybe you would rather a permanent? Then the person might be able to charge as many as they want. Mana of course would give a player a mana bonus.

When setting spells, do avoid choosing Neutral, Spell. This never seems to work right.

Note: Make sure on the trigger you select "create

player owned" to make sure the person who worships it gets the spell.

Before you submit your finished map

1. Check the HDR file one last time in your map editor. Make sure the correct number of players is displayed.

2. Always test your map. If you don't have Populous trainer, a simple method would be to rename it to .dat and .hdr to 2001. Back up the original file, then load it in Populous. See what needs tweaking, and what bugs, if any, exist. Make sure it appears playable.

3. It is always a help to have named your maps, and place the name in the file. In the matchmaker. For example, Fort World.dat - it is ok to have caps or spaces, but always make sure the exact name and casing exists with both the .dat and .hdr - This will help me process your maps much quicker. (Of course, if you already know how to make the mappack.txt file then it really doesn't matter.)

4. Make sure for each map you include the .dar and .hdr and we do not use .ver files. For example, Fort World.dat and Fort Worlds.hdr, Boxes.dat and Boxes.hdr

5. Most maps that are uploaded do get approved, and if it is not approved, we will tell you why and give you a chance to make the right changes so it can be approved.

Did I miss something?

If I missed something, you can contact Demian in the matchmaker or via Gwaeraurond@yahoo.com and I will be happy to update.

Related Links:

TedTycoon's Populous Wiki shows allot of Promise. It can be found [here](#).



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