

Destruction Zone

Version 2.0

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ABOUT THE GAME

Destruction Zone is an arcade/strategy science fiction tank war game. D-Zone works on Windows XP, Mac OS X, Linux, Solaris and Irix Silicon Graphics. Version 1.0 was written as a PC Shareware game in 1992 and owing to its popularity I started to develop a completely revised version for the future generation of computers in June 2000 and completed version 2.0 in July 2004. The latest version of D-Zone can be downloaded from www.digitalscores.com/dzone.

DESTRUCTION ZONE - THE REAL GAME

Somewhere near the center of our galaxy lies an enormous dark station. From time to time, a group of challengers travel out to the station to turn on the lights, transforming the 'Dark Zone' into the 'Destruction Zone'.

The station has many levels of different sizes. Each level is large in area, but the transparent ceiling lies only a few metres above the floor. It is the battlefield for the most famous war game in the galaxy.

A series of triangular tanks essentially made up of three huge cylinders, are teleported into the zone and hover in their positions, repelled from the floor and ceiling by strong electric forces. The liquid fuel of each tank can be seen splashing around within each cylinder and by looking closely inside, a few cables and tubes are also visible. Due to the radioactive fuels used each tank softly radiates a unique color.

As the Destruction Zone becomes even brighter, the tanks start to move. The first round has begun. The tank controllers switch between a range of weapons, blasting their foes in all directions.

As time passes, the tanks glow dimmer, for they are all low on weapon fuel. They wait in corners, absorbing the Zone light until they glow brighter, and then they launch another attack.

When a tank has taken too much damage, it is teleported out of the Zone with the unharmed controller, so everyone lives to play another game. From all around the galaxy, the D-Zone enthusiasts are waiting for the next score-board update.

Every three rounds, competitors are allowed to spend their hard-earned money in the Destruction Zone Shop, where advanced weaponry and special tools can be purchased for a suitable price. Membership discounts are available.

Sometimes there are not enough willing to play the game which is why robot tanks are often required. The robots all have different personalities, and combat standards, and some are even a challenge for highly ranked D-Zoners.

This game is a simulation of the game described above, with each tank controlled using a combination of six different keys: Forwards, backwards, turn left, turn right change weapon, and fire. The background is generated randomly at the beginning of each round and the Destruction Zone is viewed from above.

Most of the game is easy to work out without any instructions. This manual will provide extra insights into the game and highlight features that might not be obvious while playing the game.

MAIN OPTION SCREEN

The main option screen has the D-Zone tank shown over blue liquid and allows the human and robot players, number of rounds and play mode to be configured. There are many ways to play D-Zone by combining multiple human players and robots. If you are playing with more than one person and everyone feels too squashed using the same keyboard then you may want to plug in external USB keyboards for each additional player.

HOSTILE MODE

In HOSTILE mode, everyone is the enemy of everyone else. Points and shopping credits are awarded in proportion to the damage done, with a score of 100 being the maximum damage that can be made to a single tank (without players recharging their shields). Six shopping credits are awarded for each unit of damage done.

TEAMS MODE

In TEAMS mode players are grouped into two teams and each team must try to destroy the jewel protected by the opposite team. Personal scores and credits are earned in the same way as HOSTILE mode however the team's score is purely associated with the total damage made to the enemy's jewel. See the section SCORING below for more details.

D-ZONE SETUP PAGE

The setup page can be reached by clicking the 'SETUP' button from the main option screen.

If you do not like the default tank controls then you should re-define them (for any of the players) in the SETUP screen.

Game options that can be changed in SETUP.EXE are:

- 1) Re-defining tank control keys.
- 2) Choosing the kind of sound to be used.
- 3) Simplify rendering options to increase frame rate for slower machines
- 4) Defining the default view mode

All of the options other than the keyboard controls can also be changed in the middle of play by clicking the right mouse button over the D-Zone playfield.

CONTROLLING THE TANK (default keys)

PLYR 1	PLYR 2	PLYR 3	PLYR 4	ACTION
UP	W	T	I	Move forward
DOWN	S	G	K	Move backwards
LEFT	A	F	J	Rotate towards the left
RIGHT	D	H	L	Rotate towards the right
[Q	R	U	Fire current weapon
]	E	Y	O	Change weapon

If you want to end the round press ESC. This is used when computer players become stuck after all human players are out. By pressing ESC, the remaining players receive a predicted score and money bonus depending on the amount of weapon energy and shield energy each tank has. Living human players are assumed to be destroyed when ESC is pressed, so they get no bonus. Only use this quitting option to quickly get to the shopping menu to save the game or when the robots are taking too long to finish the round.

SAVING GAME

The game can be saved from the shopping screen. If you need to save the game suddenly while you are playing then you will need to press ESC to end the rounds until the next shopping screen appears.

SCORING**TANK POINTS - TEAMS MODE AND HOSTILE MODE**

DAMAGING A TANK 1 point for every unit of damage done (up to 100 points)
 6 credits for every unit of damage done (up to 600 credits)

A tank takes 100 units of damage to be destroyed, so 100 points can be earned for a complete kill. Hitting a tank with good armour means that each hit does less damage, so each hit must also earn a lower score. For this reason it is best to pick on the tanks with poor armour first, to get the most out of your weapon energy.

In team mode, additional tank points are earned for firing at the enemy jewel. This means that it is a good idea to fire at the jewel while it is slowing down, after all the enemy tanks have been destroyed.

If a tank is very close to being destroyed then it is economical to finish the tank off with a less powerful and lower priced weapon.

TEAM POINTS - TEAMS MODE ONLY

DAMAGING A JEWEL 1 point for every unit of damage done (up to 200 points)
 6 credit for every unit of damage done (up to 1200 credits)

A team receives 1 point for every unit of damage done to the enemy's jewel - up to 200 points. A jewel continually receives damage after all members of the team are out. No team points are earned for destroying or damaging tanks, although tank points are still obtained this way. The team leader is the player who has the highest tank score. Tank points are neither lost nor gained for firing at members of the same team.

SHOPPING SCREEN

Every three rounds the players can visit the D-Zone shop to buy weapons and other items. Six credits are received for every unit of damage done, either to tanks or jewels, so a maximum of 600 credits can be earned for destroying a tank and 1200 credits for completely destroying a jewel.

Information about each item can be found by clicking the 'i' button so that value for money can be compared diligently.

D-Zone will test your aptitude in economics and saving. The best players will make use of inexpensive weapons, carefully avoiding to miss, and buy the more expensive weapons only after tanks of higher weapon fuel rating and weapon fuel upgrades have been purchased. When purchasing a weapon it is important to not only be concerned with the damage / fuel ratio (which relates to how powerful the weapon is in battle) but also the damage / cost ratio (which relates more closely to the profit you can make using the weapon).

Membership to the D-Zone shop can be purchased for 3,000 credits and members receive 25% off all items for the rest of the game. Occasionally special discounts for overstocked items will be announced.

The robots will shop as carefully as they can and they may also purchase a shopping card. Robots will be exposed to the same special discounts that are announced to human players. You can also hear when the robots are upgrading their tanks.

THE STATISTICS BOARD

The statistics board is shown every 15 rounds and at the end of the game. The information is mostly self explanatory. The 'damage/fire ratio' represents the firing efficiency, hence a low value is given to the players who use low-damage weapons or often miss the target. The tank specifications will show the exact effect that any purchased tank upgrades had.

INFORMATION ON ITEMS

There are different types of items including tanks, weapons, tools and upgrades. Sometimes some of the special weapons do not seem to be worth the money, but they were all put into the game for a reason - it may simply require a bit of imagination to use some of them effectively. The descriptions given may contain some useful ideas.

TANKS

Each tank has four attributes: Speed (forwards and backwards), rotational speed, armour and weapon fuel quality. The weapon fuel quality is very important because it effects the amount of damage that each weapon does and so a tank with higher weapon fuel quality will not only win more rounds but also allow you to save money more effectively.

Upgrades for weapon fuel quality, rotation, speed, and armour can be purchased at the same price as the tank (level II upgrades are twice the price of the tank). If you have bought upgrades for a tank and then buy a new tank, the upgrades are NOT carried across to the new tank. It is sometimes more appropriate to maintain a less expensive tank and purchase upgrades and tank purchasing decisions depend very much on how many rounds are being played.

Standard Tank	This is the tank that all players begin with. WF-Weapon Fuel Quality, SH-shield, ROT-rotation, SP-speed. WF 10 SH 3 ROT 3 SP 8 Price: 2,000
Rotra I	This 'Rotation Tank' was the first non-standard tank used for D-Zone combat. It has a very compact size, much better rate of rotation and improved armour. The turn rate is even better than the most expensive OPEC 2 tank. WF 10 SH 3.5 ROT 5 SP 9 Price: 4,000
Rotra II	The improved version of the compact Rotra I was designed for even better maneuverability and supports a higher weapon fuel quality. The Rotra II allows a skillful controller to dodge missiles rather than relying on shield strength. WF 11 SH 3.5 ROT 5 SP 10 Price: 6,000
Opec I	The expensive Opec series were designed for faster velocity and significantly improved shielding. Note however that the Opec I is less compact than the Rotra I and Rotra II tanks and arguably less maneuverable. Most of what you are paying for is the higher fuel quality. WF 12 SH 4 ROT 4 SP 11 Price: 9,000
Opec II	A high price is required for the Opec II - slightly faster and more damaging than the original Opec although with the same armour and turning rate. An Opec II with level 1 and level 2 Fuel Upgrades can mean the beginning of the end for the other players. WF 13 SH 4 ROT 4 SP 12 Price: 12,000

WEAPON PORTS

Each tank has six weapon ports, used for different purposes, and each weapon occupies a particular port. The first port is always used for missiles weapons, the second port for lasers, and so on.

All weapons are purchased in units of 100. Some weapons are fired much more rapidly than other weapons (for example, Glow Shields will be fired much less frequently than Swirlers) and this should be taken into account when comparing prices.

Be careful when buying new weapons. New weapons replace any number of old weapons of the same port without warning. It is economical to use up existing weapons within a port completely or almost completely before replacing them with a different weapon.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

[Weapon Name] [Abbreviation]	[Damage] / [Weapon Energy Used] [Price]	
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PORT 1 (Missile Fire)

Single Missile (SM)	4 / 4 2	This is the weapon that all tanks start with. It is sometimes bought as a low priced backup weapon, and its ability is often underestimated, considering the negligible price.
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[Weapon Name] [Abbreviation]	[Damage] / [Weapon Energy Used] [Price]	
Double Missile (DM)	6 / 4 200	Improve the power of the standard missile without using any more energy. The low price makes this a good weapon for saving money.
Triple Missiles (TM)	9 / 4 1,200	The Triple Missile is the next step after the Double Missile. Due to its slow speed and high damage, this weapon is best used for close range combat.
Tri Breaker (TB)	24 / 12 300	A great starting weapon due to a very high damage per unit cost. On second firing the missile splits up into three, each able to do 8 units of damage. Like all breaking weapons (Breakers, Blasters and Bombs) a direct hit will only do half of the maximum damage.
Quint Breaker (QB)	40 / 12 1,500	These work the same way as the Tri Breakers, except releasing five missiles instead of three, each doing eight units of damage - good value for money.
Octo Breaker (OB)	64 / 12 8,500	The Octo Breaker is the next level up from the Quint Breaker. It will only take a few good hits to destroy any tank. Because of the high price, the players must be careful not to miss their target in order for there to be a pay-off for those wishing to save money.
Guided Missile (GU)	6 / 6 400	This missile will turn towards the closest tank that is moving. It only requires approximate aiming to hit the target although the missile can be avoided at times by momentarily staying completely still. Since it has a poor damage / energy ratio, guided missiles are mostly valuable to the lesser skilled players.

PORT 2 (Laser Fire)

Beam Laser (BL)	6 / 6 300	Like all the low priced weapons, it is a good idea to get used to using the Beam Laser. Although the expensive weapons may do more damage, you are not necessarily making more money for every unit of damage done -> Master the low priced weapons.
Power Laser (PL)	12 / 6 1,650	Power Lasers fire two Beam Lasers while using up the energy of only one. It can be used for aiming at a specific enemy rather than whomever is closest.
Tri Striker (TS)	18 / 6 3,350	The Tri Striker are three Bream Lasers in one - very energy efficient but requiring great aiming skills when used in long range firing. With the relatively high price you cannot afford to miss very often if you want a return on your investment.

PORT 3 (Alternative Fire)

Rear Double (RD)	8 / 5 250	Two missiles are fired parallel out from the rear of the tank. The weapon makes a good surprise attack, and has a strangely low price considering the damage damage it does.
Rear Guided (RG)	8 / 5 650	The Rear Guided releases two guided missiles from the rear, each doing four units of damage. Very good for attacking while being chased.

[Weapon Name] [Abbreviation]	[Damage] / [Weapon Energy Used] [Price]	
Rear Triple (RT)	15 / 5 2,400	The Rear Triple is the improved version of the Rear Double, doing nearly twice the damage for the same energy use. It can be a good alternative to the Tri Striker.

PORT 4 (Advanced Weaponry)

Blaster (BL)	120 / 30 2,500	The Blasters use the 'double fire' system, where the first fire sends out the warhead and the second fire breaks the warhead up into a group of missiles. The warheads will do half of their maximum damage when they hit a tank or jewel directly. Unlike the Breaker family of weapons, Blasters will split up in all directions and so it is very difficult to achieve the maximum damage.
Guide Blaster (GB)	120 / 30 3,200	A Blaster with a guided warhead, suitable for the desperate situation when there's no time for careful aiming or for those who are simply bad at aiming.
Blast Guider (BG)	60 / 30 3,200	The opposite effect to the Guide Blaster. The Blast Guider is a normal warhead that breaks into a group of very effective guided missiles. In open spaces or with strategic use the maximum damage can usually be obtained, making this a very good value for money weapon.
Blast Swirler (BS)	80 / 30 4,500	On second firing, the warhead will split into eight Swirlers, each doing ten units of damage. As with all other double fire weapons a direct hit will only yield half damage. The debris from Blast Swirler will swirl around for a long time and, with careful use, near maximum damage can often be obtained.
Nuke Blaster (NB)	280 / 30 20,000	This is the big version of the standard Blaster. It only takes two or three, and with a highly upgraded tank sometimes only one good hit to completely destroy a fully shielded tank. Since the weapon is not fired many times, it ends up being very good value, but must be aimed carefully.
Spark Fiends (SF)	24 / 5 7,500	You will not save much money with this weapon, but it can be used to quickly kill off unshielded rivals in open areas before they can even score their first point. By staying completely still the Spark Fiends will ignore you.

PORT 5 (Aggressive Defense)

Swirler (SW)	4 / 3 250	A missile is released which swirls around the tank with the swirling radius gradually expanding. Swirlers are usually fired in large numbers to get rid of touching or chasing tanks. Robots often avoid firing through Swirlers so they can also be used to form a protective wall.
Electro Buds (EB)	7 / 3 900	Seven slow moving missiles are released, each with a guiding system. When fired in large numbers they can act as a 'deadly mist'.

[Weapon Name] [Abbreviation]	[Damage] / [Weapon Energy Used] [Price]	
Bomb (BO)	100 / 20 1,000	Bombs are used by firing once to release the bomb and firing a second time to detonate it. You can release the bomb and then change weapons without detonating the bomb and then change your weapon back to the bomb to detonate it. Like Breakers and Blasters, Bombs will do half of their maximum damage if a tank comes into direct contact with the warhead. Sometimes they can be dropped in a place where the enemy is forced to move over or used to manipulate the movement of robots.
Death Bomb (DB)	300 / 20 8,000	These bombs will usually destroy anything that moves over them during detonation and a close range explosion will do enormous damage. This weapon provides a super return on investment if used carefully.

PORT 6 (DEFENSE)

Glow Shield (GS)	0 / 15 2,500	Glow shields give complete protection for just a few seconds. They are used for getting away from a bunch of close fighting tanks, escaping securely around a wall or for attacking in safety. The shield tends not to be useful for attacking because your weapon energy will not quite recover to the original level over the period that that shield is on. You can prevent robots from using the Glow Shield by allowing them to fire at you, dodging where possible, until their weapon energy is exhausted.
ECM Hacker (EH)	0 / 3 200	The Hacker destroys missile within a few tank lengths from your own tank. Highly experienced players will even have some success using Hackers against laser file.
ECM Wiper (EW)	0 / 3 400	The Wiper destroys every missile in the zone. It can be used to aid a friend in teams mode or waste the weapon energy and reduce the savings of your enemies.
Teleport Self (TS)	0 / 4 2,000	This device is useful for escaping from desperate situations or for freeing yourself when stuck. It uses very little energy when its fantastic power is considered. It can also be useful in Team mode.
Teleport Foe (TF)	0 / 4 2,000	This forces the nearest tank to be teleported to a random location. It is useful for escaping a closing tank, or for separating two tanks in close combat which are wasting your 'potential points'.
Heal (HE)	10 to 10 2,000	The Healers convert weapon energy to shield energy. This Healer is only used when the player has excess weapon energy but is critically down on shields.

TOOLS

Tank Upgrades	Level I: Tank Price	You can buy tank upgrades involving weapon fuel quality, speed, rate of rotation and armour. When a new tank is purchased the previous upgrades are lost. Level I upgrades are the same price as tank being upgraded Level II upgrades are available at twice the tank price. The Fuel Upgrade is highly desirable because it increases the damage that all weapons do without increasing their cost or energy use and this allows you to save more effectively.
Fuel Upgrade		
Metal Upgrade		
Speed Upgrade	Level II: 2 * Tank Price	
Turn Upgrade		

[Weapon Name] [Abbreviation]	[Damage] / [Weapon Energy Used] [Price]	
Shopping card	0/0 3,000	The common shoppers can buy a D-Zone discount membership and receive all items for only 75% the original price - a definite requirement for the long round games.
Score Bribe	0/0 5,000	This is normally used to convert your residual money into points just before the end of the game.
Larger Death	0/0 8,000	This allows the tank's explosion to do twenty times more damage than usual. Enormous damage can be done by positioning the tank side to side with the enemy, forming a rectangle, before being destroyed.
Fast Recharge	0/0 7,000	Increases the weapon recharge rate by 25%. If you have many rounds left, save up for this.
Auto Healer	0/0 6,000	The Auto Healer will allow your shields to automatically regenerate over time. Unlike weapon energy which regenerates at a fixed rate, the shields will regenerate at a rate related to the energy received from nearby tanks. Hiding in a corner far from your enemies will result in very little shield regeneration while with close navigation or combat you will have a slight advantage.

DESCRIPTION OF ROBOT TANKS

R1 Prototype	These tanks are very slow thinkers and also rather nervous, so they only dare attack the tank with the lowest score. Don't be too hard on them.
R2 Seeker	This type of robot avoids the long range fighting style and saves all of its weapon energy for quick kills at short range. They always aim for the closest tank and they may use ECM Hackers.
R3 Hunter	Only the leaders of the game should be concerned with the Hunters. Hunters like to use lasers and will ignore players that they think are inferior. When they use their Glow Shields it is better to manipulate them into wasting their weapon energy so that their shields cannot be activated, rather than using shields yourself.
R4 Defender	Defenders prefer to use laser fire and keep their distance from other players and they attempt to be efficient with their firing and save effectively.
R5 Destroyer	The Destroyers will use shields and viciously attack the closest tank in range at all times. Because these robots, like the Defenders, are fairly efficient with their firing, they tend to have a lot of credits left over at the end of a long game which they spend on Score Bribes - so remember to compare your credits as well as your score towards the end of the game.

REGISTRATION

If you enjoy this game, you should get a registered version which only costs \$25. For this you will receive a version registered in your name that will not have the annoying message at the start. Remember that further development to this game depends only on how much support I get from you. So far, each letter has given me the enthusiasm to add one or two new things to the game. Without any letters, I wouldn't make any changes to the game.

Payers can send an extra \$10 to have the latest full version of D-Zone posted to them on CD-ROM including the extended sound track. I only release a few versions below the latest publicly so the latest versions can only be obtained through myself (you are assured that the address given below will not change.)

If you like, include a note explaining any improvements you would wish to see in the game, and remember to mention which version you currently have. Your ideas may found in the next version.

Mail Order

Send \$25 (with comments) to:

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Internet Order

<http://www.digitalscores.com/dzone/registration.html>