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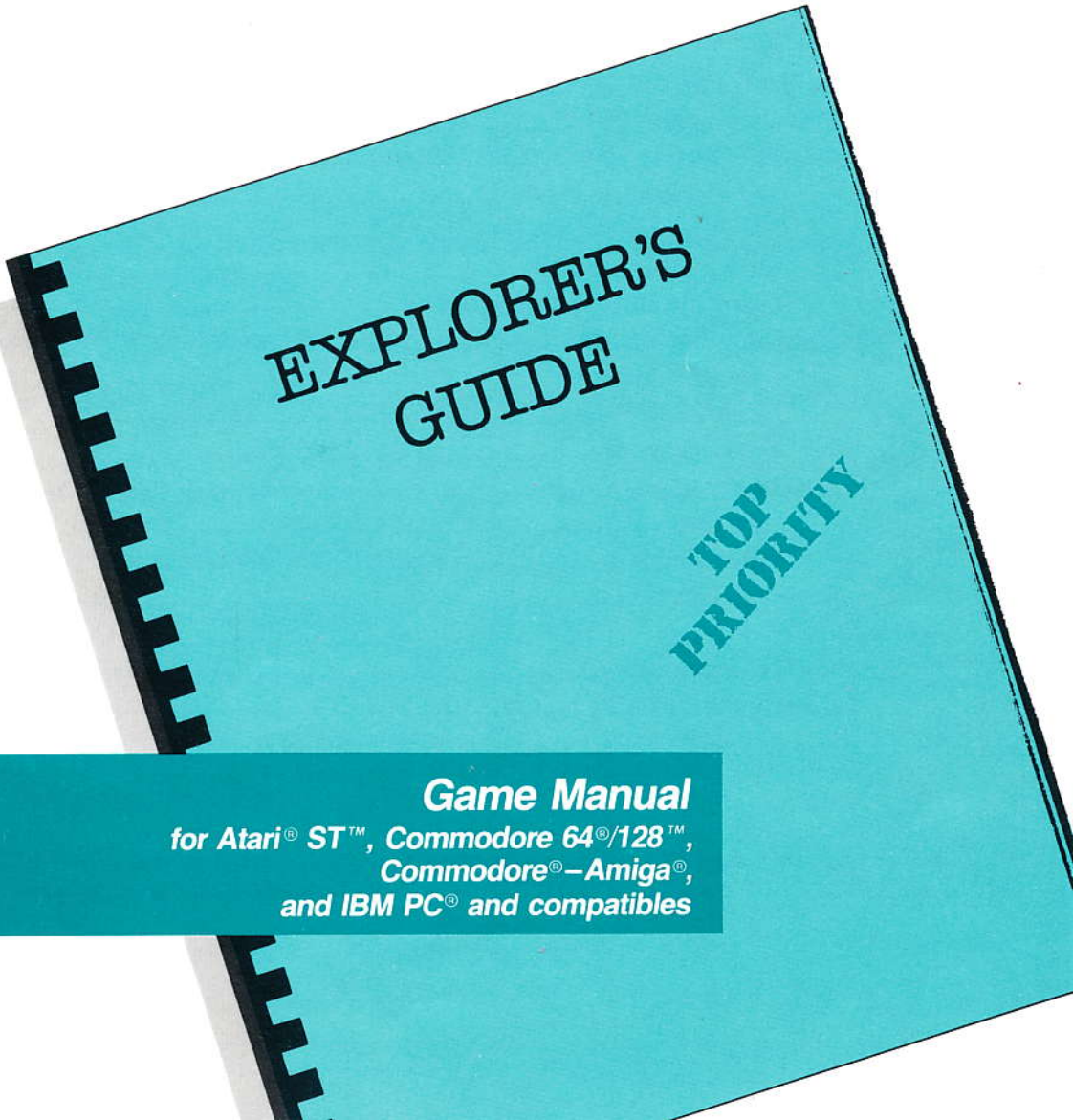
EPYX®

SPACE STATION OBLIVION™



Game Manual

for Atari® ST™, Commodore 64®/128™, Commodore®–Amiga®, and IBM PC® and compatibles

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THE CHOSEN ONE: YOU

A child of the planet Evath, you are a direct—though distant—descendant of the people of Earth. Earthlings arrived on Evath many generations ago to build a new world—a world like the now self-destructed Earth was meant to be.

Unfortunately, Earthlings brought much of what they were trying to shed to Evath. There are still energy problems—caused by a shortage of Rubicon crystals. And there are still criminals. These criminals, now called Ketars, are exiled to Mitral, one of Evath's moons.

As a child of Evath, you worked hard and studied hard. As your reward you've been admitted to the elite ranks of the Driller Federation, a powerful coalition of the wisest and strongest on Evath. Now you've been given the most important mission ever assigned to any Evathian—at any time in the planet's history.

Your mission: save the entire planet!

Unknown to most civilians, the Ketars have fled their colony on Mitral to an unpopulated continent on Evath. Why? Because they realize that Mitral is about to explode. What they don't realize is that the explosion will not only destroy Mitral—but also Evath. The explosion will throw Evath out of orbit, causing the temperature of the planet to plummet, thus destroying all life forms, including man.

The Ketars know very little about engineering, technology, or construction. In spite of this, they managed to build 18 platformed sectors around Mitral. After years of heavy-handed mining and building, vast amounts of natural gases have been trapped beneath these sectors. As the pressure inside the moon builds, these pockets of gas come closer to bursting, threatening Mitral with an explosion of astral proportions.

The Ketars should have released the gas through a simple, controlled drilling procedure, but they didn't. And now time has run out. What could have been a leisurely procedure has now become an urgent race against the clock.

That's why the elders of the Federation chose you. Not only do you have the wisdom and perseverance that hard work generates, you also have the daring and reflexes of youth.

Your job? Voyage to Mitral. Place a drill in each of the 18 sectors. It all sounds so simple, but the job requires quick reflexes and a keen mind. You have to find the sectors first. Then figure out where the gas is trapped. You'll also have to avoid the Ketar's nasty security devices. At the same time, you must constantly replenish your energy supply by locating and absorbing Rubicon crystals.

And you have only four Mitral hours to accomplish all this!

GETTING STARTED

Note: When playing *Space Station Oblivion*, use the Epyx 500XJ joystick for precise, instant control. The 500XJ is the only joystick that actually fits your hand and puts the fire button right at your trigger finger.

Commodore Amiga

1. Set up your system, following the instructions in your owner's manual.

2. Plug your mouse into mouse port 1.

3. Insert the *Space Station Oblivion* disk into the disk drive, label side up, and turn on the system.

Note: The Amiga 1000 must be booted with Kickstart before you insert the game disk. Turn on the system with Kickstart version 1.2 in the drive. (Kickstart version 1.1 may cause graphics flickers during game play.) When prompted to insert the Workbench disk, insert the *Space Station Oblivion* disk instead.

Atari ST

1. Set up your system as explained in your owner's manual. Plug your mouse into mouse port 0.

2. Insert the *Space Station Oblivion* disk into drive A, label side up, and turn on your system.

3. After *Space Station Oblivion* loads and the title screen appears, press the mouse button to continue.

Commodore 64/128

1. Set up your system as shown in your owner's manual. Plug your joystick into joystick port 2.

2. Remove all disks from the disk drives and turn on the system. (For Commodore 128, hold down the C= key when you turn on the system to set it to C64 mode. Or type **GO 64** at the prompt and press **Return**. When the prompt reappears, type **YES**.)

3. Insert the *Space Station Oblivion* disk into the drive, label side up. Type **LOAD "*",8,1** and press **Return**. (Or, if you have an Epyx Fast Load cartridge, hold down the C= key and press **Run/Stop**.)

4. After *Space Station Oblivion* loads and the title screen appears, press the fire button to continue.

IBM PC and Compatibles

1. Set up your system, following the instructions in your owner's manual.

2. If your system boots from a floppy drive, insert the DOS disk into drive A and turn on the system. If your system boots from a hard drive, turn on the system.

3. After DOS boots, remove the DOS disk from drive A (if applicable) and insert the *Space Station Oblivion* disk, label side up.

4. If your system boots from a floppy drive, type **OBLIVION** and press **Enter**. If your system boots from a hard drive, type **A:** and press **Enter**. Then type **OBLIVION** and press **Enter** again.

5. A screen appears with five options: CGA, EGA, Hercules, Tandy 1000 Mode, and Return to DOS. Type the number for your graphics card.

6. After the title screen appears, press **Spacebar**. The configuration menu appears. Select keyboard or joystick control by typing the number for your choice. Then press **Spacebar** to begin the game. If you select joystick control, follow the on-screen prompts to calibrate your joystick.

PLAYING THE GAME

Traveling across Mitral

Traveling across Mitral is an eerie and exciting adventure. Eerie, because you never encounter another Evathian—only the remains of human existence. Exciting, because you never know what's beyond the next passageway or around the next corner of this deserted astral sphere.

The Sectors

Mitral has 18 platformed sectors, and no two are the same. Some sectors are riddled with nasty security devices (see **Ketar Security Devices** for more detail). Others are relatively safe and may even have a convenient store house of Rubicon crystals.

Amethyst You start the game in this sector. It's not too dangerous and Rubicon crystals are plentiful. The drilling spot is marked.

Topaz, Emerald, Beryl These sectors are well-guarded by laser beacons.

Niccolite Watch out for the mines!

Aquamarine, Opal, Quartz There are clues in these sectors for where to drill.

Alabaster There's a swimming pool in this sector.

Lapis Lazuli, Basalt, Graphite These sectors are safer than others, but there are still dangers.

Ochre Can you get past the force field?

Diamond, Obsidian Rubicon crystals!

Ruby Be careful to stay on the girders. If you fall off, you may be stranded on Mitral's surface.

Trachyte This is the 18th sector. You can only reach it after you have successfully placed drilling rigs in the other 17 sectors.

Neutral Areas

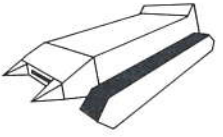
There are buildings in some of the sectors that are neutral areas. They are called Stores or Complexes. When you enter these buildings, the area indicator on your control console (see **Operating the Control Console**) shows the name of that building instead of the sector name.

The Teleporters

There are four teleporters on Mitral that let you quickly move between Amethyst, Emerald, Ruby, and Beryl. However, they are invisible until you activate them. (Hint: Start in the K1-Complex). Once activated, a teleporter appears as a large, vertical T. Run into one to move to another sector with a teleporter.

The Excavation Probe

You start out manning the excavation probe. The probe is a tank-like vehicle that remains on the surface, although the main body can be elevated above its tracks. (See **Keyboard Commands** at the back of this manual for your system's controls.)



Your excavation probe is made of durable, heavy-duty plutonium/lead alloy plating. It gets its power from energy reserves which are stored in Rubicon crystals.

This highly protective vehicle can travel forward, backward, turn left or right, as well as make 180 degree turns. Its speed can be changed by manipulating the step size and angle of turns. Plus, the probe can be tilted right or left, rotated in any direction, and elevated or lowered.

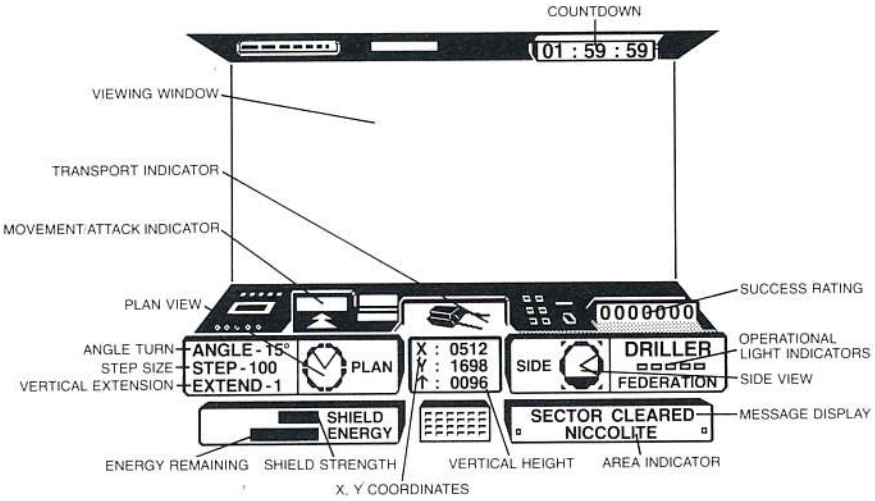
For defense, your excavation probe has a quadruple dual-action laser system that's activated from your control console. To use this sophisticated weaponry, press **Spacebar** to switch to attack mode. Use the joystick handle to position the crosshairs on your target. Fire repeatedly by pressing the fire button. (See **Keyboard Commands** at the back of this manual for your system's keyboard controls.)

Note: You can also fire your lasers while in the movement mode, although you cannot adjust your crosshairs.

Your probe can also transmit teleporting signals to Evath, necessary to place a drilling rig in each sector.

Operating the Control Console

While inside your vehicle, the following control console is at your fingertips. For information on adjusting these controls, refer to **Keyboard Commands**.

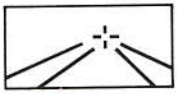


Viewing Window Through this dense and durable transpex screen, you see a view of the sector you're traveling in.

Transport Indicator This shows whether you're using the excavation probe or the reconnaissance jet. (See **The Reconnaissance Jet** for more details.)

Movement/Attack Indicator

Movement Mode



Attack Mode

Plan View This works like a compass to show which direction you're looking. (Up is North, right is East, and so on.)

Angle Turn This controls the size of your turns. The greater the number, the wider your turns.

Step Size This controls the length of your movements. The higher the number, the farther you move with each step.

Vertical Extension When you drive the excavation probe, this shows how high the main body is extended above the tracks. There are four levels of extension (0-3). If you're flying the reconnaissance jet, it registers a "J."

Energy Remaining The length of the bar shows the amount of energy left in your Rubicon crystals. If it's running low, you should gather more Rubicon crystals as quickly as you can. If this indicator dips to 0, your craft is stranded and your people are doomed.

Shield Strength The length of the bar shows how much strength you have left. You start with full protection on your vehicle's armor. But as damage is inflicted on your craft, your shield loses its effectiveness. Gather more Rubicon crystals to increase its strength again.

X, Y Coordinates These pinpoint your position on each sector platform. Each platform is square, with each side measuring 8128 SDUs (Sector Drilling Units). As you move, these coordinates change. The coordinate pair can be valuable when determining where to place your drilling rigs.

Vertical Height This shows how high off the platform your craft is.

Countdown Keep an eye on this one. It shows how much time you have left before Mitral explodes.

Success Rating This shows your degree of success, which is based on such things as successfully placing drilling rigs, collecting Rubicon crystals, and deactivating the Ketar's security devices.

Operational Light Indicators When these lights are flashing, your command, such as firing your quadruple dual-action lasers or placing a drilling rig, is being processed.

Side View This shows the direction you're looking relative to the platform surface. Right is forward, left is upside down, down is at the sector's surface, and up is toward the sky.

Message Display It's here that you receive information from your central computer—very often about the success or failure of your operations.

Area Indicator This is the name of the sector or neutral area that you're currently exploring.

The Reconnaissance Jet

It is believed that the Ketars left at least one jet on Mitral when they fled. (Hint: To find it, start by looking for the obvious place to keep a jet.)

If you find the reconnaissance jet, you can fly over the entire sector. See things you have never seen before! But be careful: the jet relies on the sector surface for stability. If you fly off the sector edge, you'll fall onto Mitral's surface and may be stranded.

To use the jet, you must transfer into it by docking your excavation probe into the underside of the vehicle. Once the docking is successful, you'll be flying the jet instead of driving the probe. The jet uses many of the same controls as the excavation probe.

These jets, built by the Ketars for general transportation, have no specialized armored cover. So they're more vulnerable to attack than the probe. However, they are equipped with the same type of quadruple dual-action lasers as the probe. And like your probe, the jet runs on energy from the Rubicon crystals.

Use the same commands for flying your jet that you used for driving the probe. (See **Keyboard Commands** for your system in the back of this manual.) But there are two differences:

1. Jets can fly over the sector.
2. Jets do not have the necessary equipment to teleport drilling rigs.

To return to the probe—land the jet directly over the probe.

Drilling for Gas

To drill beneath the surface of Mitral you need a special drilling rig that is instantaneously teleported from Evath at your command. Your exact location is signaled to Evath along with your command, so that you can place the rig precisely where you want it.

Due to the complexity and expense of teleporting drilling rigs from Evath, you are only given one rig for each of Mitral's 18 sectors. If you make an error in positioning the rig, cancel it by teleporting it back to Evath. Then reposition it by ordering it from Evath again. But remember: every time you place or cancel a rig, you use valuable energy.

The drilling rigs bore through the rock using a narrow, concentrated laser. When the gas deposits have been tapped, the gas ascends (from the pressure) through the rock and slowly burns off in a safe and controlled manner. After a successful drilling, you will see a flame at the top of the rig structure.

To teleport a rig—Press **D** on the keyboard.

To cancel the rig—Press **C** on the keyboard.

Using the Information Readout

To view information vital to your mission, access the Information Readout from time to time. To do so, press **I** on your keyboard. The Readout appears in your window.

Sector This is the name of the sector you're currently exploring.

Rig Status This shows whether or not a rig has been placed in this sector.

Gas Found This is the amount of gas found (in cubic feet) beneath the current sector after drilling.

Percentage Tapped This is the percentage of gas you have released. You need to tap at least 50% to make the sector safe.

Gas Tapped This is the amount of gas that you have tapped in the current sector.

Total Sectors This is the number of sectors on Mitral.

Safe Sectors This is the number of sectors you have successfully tapped (by releasing at least 50% of its gas).

Load/Save Use these commands to load a saved game or to save your current game.

Sound Press **T** to toggle the sound on and off or to toggle between music and sound effects, depending upon your computer system.

Abort (Terminate) Use this only in dire emergencies—when there's too little time left and too many sectors still untapped.

Searching for Rubicon Crystals

Just like everywhere else in the universe, life on Mitral depends on energy to survive. Here, the primary energy source is Rubicon crystals.

You start with a short supply of your own Rubicon crystals. But moving, drilling, and firing continuously drains this precious commodity.

To replenish your energy supply, you must find additional Rubicon crystals throughout your travels. (Hint: Crystals were sometimes placed in storage buildings.) To tap the crystals' energy, blast them with your laser beams. Their energy will travel along your beams, back to your ship.

There are two varieties of crystals: ones that increase your energy and ones that increase the effectiveness of your shield. In time, you will learn the difference.

Be warned: since Ketar technology is alien to you, standard procedures may prove unpredictable. For example, Rubicon crystals are sometimes arranged to alter their overall effect.

Ketar Security Devices

When the Ketars left Mitral they set their security devices on automatic—and they can be dangerous!

Laser Beacons

Originally designed to scare off curfew offenders, these devices fire a deadly high-voltage laser beam. And they never miss. You can sometimes squelch a laser beacon's attack by attacking back, but this approach isn't predictably effective. So if it's not working, back out of range. Or make a run for it.

Ketar Skanners

These orbiting menaces are well-armed. You'll find that out soon enough.

Mines

These weren't used as much as other security devices, but they are still a hazard.

Switches

Some of the Ketars' security devices, including hidden doors, are controlled by switches. Usually these switches are on the walls, although sometimes they are cubes sitting on the ground. Toggle a switch on or off by firing at it with your quadruple dual-action lasers. Be warned: switches that control hidden doors to a sector are not located in that sector. Also, you may need to turn on more than one switch just to gain access to a single sector!

Force Fields

Sometimes you can break through a force field by finding its weakest spot. However, some of the force fields must be deactivated by shooting the switches that control it—usually in different sectors.

Survival Tips

- As you enter each sector, use all possible directions of movement and vision to get a thorough overview. You will have fewer surprises and a better chance at finding the drilling spot.

- Fly over the entire sector in the reconnaissance jet to get an all-encompassing view of your surroundings. You can also fly to new sectors and land there.

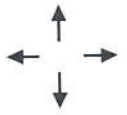
- In Niccolite only precise coordinates will work when trying to drill. There is a clue to these coordinates hidden in this manual.

- Draw a map of your travels and keep it with you for all games. Then, as you learn more, continue to refine and update it as you go. The more detailed and accurate your map, the greater your chances for success.

KEYBOARD COMMANDS

Commodore 64/128

Movement/Attack Indicator Press **Spacebar** to toggle between movement and attack modes. In the movement and attack modes, use the following keys or joystick controls:

Joystick		Keyboard
		↑ Q W =
Fire Button	=	**Shift**

Fire your lasers in either mode by pressing the **Shift** key (if the crosshairs are on) or the fire button.

Hide/Show Crosshairs Press + to toggle the crosshairs on and off while in the movement mode.

Angle Turn Press **A** to increase the angle of your turns. Press **Z** to decrease the angle.

Step Size Press **S** to increase your step size. Press **X** to decrease your step size.

Vertical Extension Press **R** to raise the jet or increase the vertical extension of the probe above its tracks. Press **F** to lower the jet or decrease the vertical extension of the probe.

Tilt Press **<** to tilt left and press **>** to tilt right.

U-Turn Press **U** to turn 180 degrees.

Drill Press **D** to place a drilling rig.

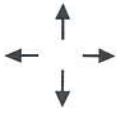
Cancel Drilling Press **C** to cancel drilling.

Look Up/Down Press **P** to look up. Press **L** to look down.

Information Screen Press **I** to access the Information Screen. There are options for saving, loading, and aborting a game.

IBM PC and Compatibles

Movement/Attack Indicator Press **Spacebar** to toggle between movement and attack modes. In the movement and attack modes, use the following keys or joystick controls:

Joystick		Keyboard		Numeric Keypad
		O Q W K		8 4 6 2
Fire Button	=	**0**	=	**5**

Fire your lasers in either mode by pressing **5** on your numeric keypad, or **0** (not on numeric keypad), or the fire button.

Hide/Show Crosshairs Press **+** (not on numeric keypad) to toggle the crosshairs on and off while in the movement mode.

Angle Turn Press **A** to increase the angle of your turns. Press **Z** to decrease the angle.

Step Size Press **S** to increase your step size. Press **X** to decrease your step size.

Vertical Extension Press **R** to raise the jet or increase the vertical extension of the probe above its tracks. Press **F** to lower the jet or decrease the vertical extension of the probe.

Tilt Press **N** to tilt left and press **M** to tilt right.

U-Turn Press **U** to turn 180 degrees.

Drill Press **D** to place a drilling rig.

Cancel Drilling Press **C** to cancel drilling.

Look Up/Down Press **P** to look up. Press **L** to look down.

Information Screen Press **I** to access the Information Screen. There are options for saving, loading, and terminating a game.

Return to Graphics Menu Press **Esc** during game play.

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Part #1510A-60