

Moonbase Beta

Machine Requirements

This game will run on all the Acorn range of computers except the Atom, Electron, Archimedes and the BBC Model A. If you have got anything other than the above listed, the game should run. (Hopefully!)

P.S. Electron users: Hang around. I hope to produce a version for your machine as soon as I get hold of an Electron.

Loading the game

Switch on the computer, disc drive and monitor. Put the disc into drive number 0. The disc is a dual format disc so it does not matter what your track selector switch is set to. Hold down <SHIFT> and press and release <BREAK> while still holding down <SHIFT>. The disc drive should start up and the program should load. The title screen should appear after a few seconds.

Keys

The following keys are used to control Special Agent Sid.

Walk left:	Z
Walk right:	X
Climb up/Open doors/Log onto computers:	*
Climb down:	?
Jump:	<RETURN>
Pick up/drop object:	P
Select object:	C
Use object:	U
Fire gun:	<SPACE>

The above keys can all be re-defined, but the following cannot:

End game:	<ESCAPE>
Pause and un-pause	<DELETE>
Sound toggle (Can only be used when paused):	S

To re-define the keys, just press K on the title screen.

The plot

I would advise you to read the following file, as it contains some useful clues to complete the game.

File number: 172415/AA1393

Briefing to: Special Agent Sid

Time and date: 8:56 10th July 2091

Location: Moonbase Beta,
Iconiar, moon of Centroi II.

Colony type: Scientific and Mining.

Planet/moon info: Iconiar is rich in sulphur, plutonium, and many rare metals. Gravity is 5 times greater than Earth, it has no atmosphere, and is prone to asteroids impact. Was colonised in 2042. The primary task of the moonbase is mining Plutonium, but it also carries out scientific studies and experiments.

Colony achievements: Cold fusion (2053)
Teleportation (2069)
Warp space drive (2081).

Mission details: 5 escape pods were picked up four hours ago. They have all come from Iconiar. The reason for leaving the Moonbase was that a miner had found a fusion bomb and it is believed to be set to go off at 10:00. Your mission, should you decide to accept it (In fact, you have got no choice!) is to find and defuse the fusion bomb. There is strong evidence to suggest that the visiting Aliens are responsible. You are therefore instructed to destroy the Alien's Spacecraft by whatever means. Since the moon is very rich in plutonium, it is vital that the bomb is defused, as there is no other source of plutonium. (Planet Earth's stocks ran out in 2050.)

Equipment supplied: Radiation pulse gun,
Space suit,
Oxygen generator,
Power pack,
Watch.

End of file.

The game

The game is an arcade adventure type game, and the object of these type of games in general is to complete a set of puzzles, while at the same time avoiding or shooting aliens.

In this case, you must not only find and defuse a bomb, but also blow up a spacecraft.

Moving around

Use your direction keys (Left, Right, Up, Down) to move around the complex. You can also jump (Not very high though!!!) and climb ladders using the up and down keys.

Also I must point out that the law of gravity has been implemented, so if you are not standing on anything, you will fall!!!

As you wander around the complex, you will find doors (Like the one 2 screens to the left of your start position), which you can enter providing they are unlocked. But be warned, there are doors which don't look like doors!! (Secret doors in other words.) To enter a door just stand in front of it and press the up key.

Objects

In order to complete your mission, you must find a bomb defuse kit (As mission control forgot to supply you with one). But it is not easy to find, as in order to get it you must solve a series of puzzles, by finding objects and using them correctly.

All objects appear in the same place when you start a new game, and when you pass them they will appear in front of you.

You can only use objects in certain places and, although you may carry two at a time, only one of them may be selected. The arrow points to your selected object. When an object is selected, it is described to you. To select an object you are carrying, just use the select key.

To pick up an object, stand behind it and press the up key. The object should appear in the top of the screen into your selected pocket. You can drop objects anywhere you like by just pressing your pick up key but there may be only two objects on the current screen at once. If you are already carrying an object in your currently selected pocket, and try to pick another up, you will just exchange it.

When you find an object, you can try to use it by pressing the up key. The computer will check if it is possible to use it. i.e. You can use weedkiller to kill the great big Iconian plant, but you can't use it to blow up a door.

You will find objects known as "Keypasses" (There are four of them) and they open the doors with numbers on them. Some require more than one Keypass. If you find a door with more than one number on it, then you need both keypasses, and to open them just use each Keypass in turn. e.g. You find a door with 2-4 on it. You need to find Keypass 2 and Keypass 4 to open it. To open it just use Keypass 2 and then select Keypass 4 and use it. The door should open.

Computers

Dotted around the complex are computer terminals which, when activated, carry out certain tasks, such as unlocking doors, and firing laser drills. In order to activate them you must have the correct password. To find passwords, you must find and walk past the "P" signs. Some terminals require data for them to operate correctly, such as laser drill maps, or teleport data. But you may find that when you first try to log on to a terminal it will say "Network off line". To overcome this problem, find the program disc and use it at the terminal.

Energy

The energy bar is just below the top of the screen and in the middle.

Your energy level is full when you start the game, but energy is lost when you use your radiation gun, and colliding with aliens. It also goes down when you touch spikes, Iconian plants and electric floors. You can gain energy by finding passwords, and completing puzzles correctly. You can also top up with energy by finding an energy pack, or the kit-kat bar. If your energy level reaches zero, or you run out of time, you will die.

Aliens... and Aliens

Now I would not make your track that easy, would I????!!

Yes, you guessed it. A load of Aliens are out to get you but help is at hand as mission control did remember to give you a radiation pulse gun.

Your radiation gun is capable of destroying any Aliens close around you. It also automatically fires should an Alien collide with you. This is to be avoided as you lose a lot of energy.

Each screen has its own Aliens moving in a set pattern and you can kill them. If you kill the Aliens on a screen and then leave the screen, they will re-appear when you return to that screen.

Also from time to time, Aliens get transported in and will move in a set pattern or home-in on you. You can kill these Aliens like any other Aliens.

Scoring and time

You score points for solving puzzles and finding passwords and also for killing any Aliens. The two other digits are your % score, and show you how much of the game you have completed.

The time is to show what time it is as the bomb goes off at 10:00.

You score as follows:

Completing a puzzle	5000+
Finding a Password	2500
Unlocking a door	1500+
Every Second left on the clock when the bomb is defused	10
Killing 1 Alien	10
Killing 2 Aliens	30
Killing 3 Aliens	70
Killing 4 Aliens	150

Author's notes

This game is complete but there may be some minor bugs. If you find any, please tell me. The game started to take shape in July 1990. and I hoped to finish it in March 1991, but I spent more time implementing a great bunch of improvements and memory saving techniques as I ran out of memory a few times, and came across some major bugs.

The game runs in four-colour Mode 5, but with some special tricks, I have got more than four. Animation takes place at 25 frames a second, and features nearly 100 different sprites. The main game does not use any Operating System routines (for speed purposes). The code is over 25K long, and all the source code and data takes up over 1 Megabyte of disc space, and was put altogether with the aid of my linking program.

It has been fun writing this game, and I intend to write another game soon, but what it will be, I don't know yet. A few ideas have crossed my mind such as "Beyond Moonbase Beta" which would be a follow-up to this game and also "Alien Nation" which would be an adventure set in this time where a poor old Alien crash-landed on Earth.

Solution

OK then. Here is the solution to Moonbase Beta. Two objects, the Energy pack and the Kit Kat are left for you to find and use, as they are not required to complete the game. Ignore the Rubber Fish, as it is just a Red Herring.

Go left two screens and enter the door to the main complex. Go right one screen and pick up the spring and use it. This will help you jump much higher.

Go outside again and go right several screens to find and pick up Keypass 1. Make your way back again into the main complex. From the main door, go up and left one screen to door number 1.

Use Keypass 1 to unlock the door and drop Keypass 1. Go left one screen and pick up the weedkiller. Don't fall through the gap otherwise you will become trapped.

Make your way outside again and back to the start screen. Climb up one screen and pick up the program disc. Climb up another screen and walk over the P sign for terminal G. Keep on climbing up until you get to the top of the building.

Walk left three screens and down one screen then left two screens. You should be on the other side of the moonbase roof.

Fall off the roof to the surface and walk left several screens until you come to "The Great Iconian Weed." Use the weedkiller to kill it and walk on left to find the P sign for Terminal B and Keypass 2.

Make your way back to the boundary of the moonbase building. Climb the ladder and go right one screen and stop above the ladder. Jump right to the ledge in the screen above and walk over the P sign for Terminal H and pass the locked door. Fall off the edge of the ledge back down to the screen below.

This method going around the top of the building and jumping around is the only way to get past the screen with all the spikes, as it is impossible to pass this otherwise without losing a lot of energy.

You should now be standing outside the door to the main complex. Enter it and make your way to Terminal B, which is two screens up and one screen right.

Use the Program Disc to turn on the network and then log onto terminal B. This will unlock the secret door to the left of the terminal. Enter the secret door behind the six small crates and enter the Stores.

Go left four screens, jumping over the gaps as you go, ignoring Terminal D and also Terminal I on the way. Go down to the Junction and then down one screen. Walk left down the long passage until you find Keypass 3. Pick it up and work your way back to the Junction.

Go right with Keypass 2 & 3 and unlock door number 2-3. Make your way back to the main door, and go back into the main complex.

Go down two screens and left two screens and then unlock door number 3. Drop Keypass 3 in a safe place and go left to find the P sign for Terminal F.

Go right four screens. Unlock door number 2 with Keypass 2 and go right one screen, and then up one screen.

Log onto Terminal F to unlock Door C. Go right several screens to the end of the passage and then down one screen to pick up the Laser Drill Map. Work your way back the same way to the screen with Terminal F.

Go up and right to find the P sign for Terminal E. Make your way back to the main entrance to the main complex and drop the Laser Drill Map.

Find Keypass 1 & 3 and go up two screens and unlock door number 1-3. Go left and find the P sign for Terminal C. Find the Laser Drill Map again and go outside and walk right until you find another door. Unlock it by logging onto Terminal C and enter the door.

You are now on the Laser Drill Rig. Log onto Terminal E with the Laser Drill map selected. This will drill out the rock on the screen where you found Keypass 1.

Leave the Laser Drill Rig and go right to the screen with the drilled out rock. Go right again and you should be in the underground caves with the Hexagons.

Fall off the edge and keep left pressed until you land safely on a ledge in the screen below. If you don't land on a ledge you will fall into the spike pit.

Jump carefully over the gaps towards the Mining Pass and pick it up. Go left two screens and enter the red-blue striped door which does back into the stores.

Make your way back to the main door and into the main complex. Find and pick up Keypass 1. Make your way around the top of the building to the left of the moonbase. Unlock the door to the Crystal Mines by using the Mining Pass. Go back for the Keypass 3 and enter the Crystal Mines.

Go right and down to the bottom of the right hand mine shaft and left one screen. Unlock door number 1-3 and drop Keypass 1 and 3. Make your way down to the left hand mine shaft, and then go right and pick up the Crystal. Jump back to the left of the gap and keep walking right until you land in the alcove on the right in the screen below.

Go back up the shaft to the entrance and go outside again. Walk left to where you found Keypass 2 and use the Crystal to reveal a secret entrance to the Secret Mines.

Enter the Secret Mines via the secret door which is in the middle of the hexagons. Pick up Keypass 4 and go right one screen.

In the middle of the large gap is an invisible platform which the Teleport Data sits on. It is a very tricky jump to make and if you miss you will end up in the pit of spikes on the screen below.

If you make it, pick up the Teleport Data and make your way back outside again. Go back to the main complex and go right two screens and up one screen.

Unlock door number 4 and then walk over the P sign for Terminal I. Then go and find Keypass 2 again, and drop the Teleport Data.

From the main complex door, go up two screens and then left one screen, past the P sign, and enter the door to the Teleport Area. Go right, unlock door number 2-4 and drop Keypass 4. Go left and leave the Teleport Area.

Go right two screens and enter the secret crate door. Go left three screens and fall through the large gap. Pick up the Teleport Recall. Go right to Terminal I, the left terminal and log onto it. You should now be on the top platform. Go back out of the area again into the main complex and find the teleport data.

Make your way back to the Teleport Area, and when you are in there, go right two screens. Log onto Terminal H with the Teleport Data selected. The Teleport should now be activated.

Go back and find Keypass 4. Now enter the Teleport which is under the large pillar. It is automatic, and you should now be on the Alien's Spaceship.

Go right and unlock door number 4. Then enter the door to a Storeroom. Pick up the Bomb Defuse Kit and drop Keypass 4. Leave the Storeroom. You are now one screen above where you were teleported to.

Go left, jumping over the electric pit, and fall off into the gap to land in the screen below. Go right back to door number 4 and fall off through the gap, into a room identical to the Storeroom but it has a P sign.

Walk over the P sign for Terminal D and use the Teleport Recall. You will now be back in the Teleport Area.

Leave the Teleport Area, go back outside and go to the Secret Mines containing the Bomb. Go right two screens to find the bomb.

Use the Bomb Defuse Kit to defuse the bomb. You will now get 10 points for every second left on the clock.

Go back out and make your way back to the main complex. From the door, go right and up one screen and pick up the Hammer. Go up one screen and enter the Crate door.

In the Stores, log onto Terminal D to unlock the C door. Go right and walk over to the P sign for Terminal A. Also pick up the Special Key. Leave this area and go back to the Teleport Area.

Enter the teleport, back again to the Alien's Spacecraft. Go down and log onto Terminal A to start the self-destruct countdown. You have now 60 seconds to escape from the Alien's Spacecraft so don't hang around reading the Terminal messages.

Log off, go right and fall through the gap back into the storeroom with the P sign in it. Use the Special Key to unlock the door and then enter it. You are now in the Landing Bay.

Smash the Glass Door with the Hammer and go right to the Escape Pod. Log onto Terminal G to unlock the door. Log off again and enter the door to the Escape Pod.

Sit back and watch the fireworks. You have now completed Moonbase Beta and well done. OK now, you are in an Escape Pod but where is it heading? Is it going back home? Or somewhere else? Perhaps that is a story for another day...

Well this is probably the longest solution for any game I have seen and I ask myself "Is my game that difficult?!"

Cheat mode

I am sure by now you are having a little difficulty in playing the game but help is at hand.

The game features a built-in cheat mode. When it is activated, it will just give you infinite energy. To activate it just hold down the three keys PBK on the title screen. A silly message will then appear to acknowledge that it is active.

Credits

The game and documentation to MOONBASE BETA are (c) Pete Hatton.

Go to <http://www.monolight.org/bbc/diary.php> to see the restoration diary of MOONBASE BETA.

Instructions in Microsoft Word format by (the) Dave. For more documentation like this, keep an eye on the following sites:

<http://www.acornelectron.co.uk>
<http://www.8bs.com> (Manuals/Scans Section)
<http://www.stairwaytohell.com>
<http://bbc.nvg.org>