

Create Or Conquer Game Development Guide

Version 1.2.5

Thursday, January 18, 2007

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Game Development Guide	1
Getting Started, Understand the World Building System	3
Adding Items	4
Creating Transparent Gifs	5
Creating Transparent GIFs using Adobe Photoshop.....	6
Uploading Images	6
Editing Items	6
Adding Buildings	7
Step 1: Select a Game Type	7
Step 2: Select a NPC Race	7
Step 3: Select a Gender and Name for your NPC.....	7
Step 4: Select NPC Avatar	7
Step 5: Enter Building and NPC information	8
Editing Buildings	9
Adding SubRooms	9
Editing Subrooms.....	10
Adding Containers	10
Editing Containers.....	11
Adding Quests	11
Editing Quests	13
Assembling a Quest.....	13
Adding Traps	13
Editing Traps.....	14
Sharing Items and Traps.....	14
Note About Adding Description Field Content.....	14
Removing Data	15

Getting Started, Understand the World Building System

The world building system is simple, yet complex at times. I built it using ID numbers mainly. For example, when you create an item, it is automatically assigned an ID. If you want to assign the item to a container – when you create the container there is a field called Item ID – this is where you put the ID value of the item.

The system will check to make sure items, traps and building ID values exist – so it's hard to go wrong.

But keeping it all-straight can be a little maddening at times. Sorry.

Adding Items

I hope this form looks straightforward. I'll explain each of the fields briefly. You'll see a red * beside some fields – this means the field is required in order to add the item.

Field Name	Field Description
Game Type*	The type of game that the item is associated with
Item Name*	The name of the item, max. 50 characters
Item Description*	Brief item description, max. 255 characters
Item Cost*	Cost of the item, vendors will up this price considerably
Item Damage	Currently not used by the system
Heal Health	Amount of health the item heals, system only does 1 heal per item
Heal Fatigue	Amount fatigue is raised
Heal Strength	Amount strength is raised
Heal Mind	Amount mind skill is raised
Heal Luck	Amount luck is raised
Damage Health	Amount health is lowered, system only does 1 damage per item
Damage Fatigue	Amount fatigue is lowered
Damage Strength	Amount strength is lowered
Damage Mind	Amount mind is lowered
Damage Luck	Amount luck is lowered
# of Uses	Number of uses an item has, if 0 the item will be removed after one use
Is Quest Item	If this item is associated with a quest, quest items will not be shown in vendors as items for sale, a quest may have many items associated with it, but only one item may be the final quest item
Can Pick Locks	Can this item open locks
Can Probe Traps	Can this item probe traps
Is Armor	Item will increase the player's stats (uses any of the Heal values, eg: Heal Health)
Is Light Source	Item will allow entry to buildings with Requires Light Source checked
Icon*	Image (transparent gif format) for this item, required
Is Craftable	Enter the item ID of the item that will result from the crafting process
Is a Recipe	If the item is a recipe item, check this box. The crafthouse looks for this flag.
Resource ID 1	If you selected craftable, enter a valid item ID here. This item ID should be for a resource (ex: metal bar, wood log etc)

Resource ID 2	Optional value if your item requires more than 1 resource item
Resource ID 3	Optional value if your item requires more than 1 resource item

Creating Transparent Gifs

I am including this portion for those of you who have Adobe Photoshop. It is very highly recommended that you create transparent gifs for your item icons.

Here are some basic requirements for item icons.

File Type	GIF
Background	Transparent
Max Width	41 pixels
Max Height	50 pixels
Max File Size	3-5 KB

Sometimes when searching the Web you find an image that is already and transparent GIF. Just resize the image to 41 pixels wide, and resave it – and it will be ready for upload.

Here are some step-by-step instructions on creating a transparent GIF using Adobe Photoshop CS2.

If you have another image program and wish to contribute a how-to on making transparent GIFs, please email it to us.

Creating Transparent GIFs using Adobe Photoshop

1. Find an image from Google images. I usually search 'boots clip art' or something to find a similar style of image. I'd like the game icons to keep some sort of consistency.
2. Save the JPEG image to your computer and open it in Adobe Photoshop
3. Select the Magic Wand icon and click in the background area of the image, the boots and outer edge of the image should be selected. Look for any areas that aren't fully selected (sometimes little pieces are missed). Hold the Control key and click on the little pieces, until the whole boots image is selected.
4. Click in the Select Menu and click Inverse
5. Click in the Edit menu, click Copy, and then click Paste
6. On your Layers window you should have a new layer, click the background layer, it should go transparent (checkered)
7. Click the Image menu, select Image Size, set the width to 41 pixels, the height should take care of itself.
8. Save the image as boots.gif. When saving set Gif Options to Normal (if prompted)

So there you go, you have a transparent image! You can now upload the image as the icon for your new item.

Uploading Images

To upload an image, click the Browse button next to the icon field, a pop up will appear and let you navigate your computer to look for the image to upload. Make sure it's a transparent GIF. Double click the image on your computer to select it. The pop up window will close and the path to the image on your computer will be inserted into the icon field. You're ready to go, click the Add Item button.

Each time an item image is uploaded, I assign the itemID to the front of the image name, so you could name all your images boots.gif and they would all be unique on the server (because the itemID is unique to each item).

Editing Items

Editing items is similar to adding items. Change the values in the fields if you need to. You don't need to upload the image again (unless you want to change it).

Adding Buildings

Adding a building is made up of 5 steps. Each step will customize the NPC who resides in the building. All buildings from street level require a NPC to reside in them. You are able to add SubRooms to an existing building. A Subroom is discussed later.

Step 1: Select a Game Type

Select the game type that your building will reside in (this is similar to creating a character).

Step 2: Select a NPC Race

Select a race for your NPC character, who resides in your building.

Step 3: Select a Gender and Name for your NPC

Select a gender for your NPC, and enter a name. Same rules apply to NPC names as player names – be polite 😊

Step 4: Select NPC Avatar

Click on the avatar image for your NPC character. You will proceed to Step 5.

Step 5: Enter Building and NPC information

This screen is the main portion of a building. Here you can create the building name, building description, NPC information.

Here's some quick information about building data

Field Name	Description
Street Name*	The name of the street you want the building to be on
Building Name*	The name of the building, max. 50 characters
Building Description*	Information about the building, up to 10,000 characters (a lot)
NPC Name*	Name of your NPC, max. 50 characters
NPC Description*	Information about your NPC, up to 10,000 characters (a lot)
NPC Image*	The avatar for your NPC
Container ID	An ID selected from the container list, click the link to view your container list
Container ID2	An ID selected from the container list, click the link to view your container list
Container ID3	An ID selected from the container list, click the link to view your container list
Is a Chatroom	Check this box if you want this to be a chatroom
Is a Merchant	Check this box if you want this to be a Merchant
Is a Vault	Check this box is you want this to be a Vault
Is a Vendor	Check this box if you want this to be a Vendor
Is a SubRoom	Check this box if it is a sub room, it won't show on the streets screen
Is a Craffhouse	Check this box if you want this to be a Craffhouse
Requires Light Source	Check this box to make the player require a light source item in their Inventory to continue
MonsterID	An ID selected from the monster list, click the link to view the world monster list

Subroom can be checked with any of these other checkboxes. But you can't have a building act as a chatroom AND a vault, etc. It may only have one purpose. Checking a room as a subroom, will make the building not show from street level. A subroom is a room connected within a building (via a container).

When you add a building, it will check to ensure that your item and trap IDs exist – so make sure you have created your items and traps, else you can come back and edit your building later.

You may only select one checkbox, unless you are checking chatroom and subroom together. Otherwise the first selection will be chosen (your building would be a merchant, even if you chose Vendor too – so don't 😊)

Editing Buildings

To edit a building, click the Edit link. The edit screen will have your building information filled in for you. You can change any of the information around, and even change the avatar for your NPC.

Adding SubRooms

To add a SubRoom, click the 'Add SubRoom' link. A SubRoom is a building that does not show in the Streets screen. It is meant to be a part of a building within an existing building – for example a broom closet, a passageway, etc. Adding a SubRoom from the Building List screen is a quick way to add one. The long way to add a SubRoom is to use the Add Building screen and go through all the prompts.

Using the quick way will carry your NPC data along with it. You can also easier add a SubRoom to a SubRoom by using a container as a connector.

Containers can be boxes, crates, bags – but can also be doors, gates, anything connecting.

I know this might get confusing, sorry, but here we go.

Example: Lou has a house, and in his house he has a broom closet door, that connects to a broom closet. Lou's house is a building, his closet door is a container (locked, trapped) and his broom closet is a SubRoom.

You can connect SubRooms together by using containers (like a door, trap door, false floor etc).

What works best for me is writing out my quest, laying out all the pieces, then creating them in order and writing their ID values on my original piece of paper that I wrote my quest notes on. Then I can go a cross-reference all my pieces of the quest to ensure it will work. Then I can take one of my characters through it to make sure it all connects and works out.

A note about SubRooms, they don't have NPC data (name, description or avatar) showing.

You can make a SubRoom a chatroom by using the regular add Building route, or create a quick SubRoom and then edit it – the edit screen will allow you to set it as a chatroom. I like to bury a few chatrooms in secret for people to find. 😊

In your Building List you'll see SubRooms marked, so you know a SubRoom from a regular building. SubRooms won't have an avatar displayed either in the Building List.

Editing Subrooms

Editing a SubRoom uses the regular Building edit screen. You'll see the NPC data is not filled in (or so it looks). There is actually a space character in the NPC fields – this is so the required fields checker doesn't make you fill it in. As mentioned before, SubRooms don't need to have NPC data because we already know who owns the room.

Adding Containers

Adding a container is pretty straightforward. Select your game type, enter your container name and description. Enter an item ID (if the container is going to contain an item), and enter a trap ID (if the container is going to be trapped). Check the locked checkbox if you want it to be locked. If you check the locked checkbox, be sure to fill in the Min Mind and Min Luck values.

Here's some basic information about the fields:

Field Name	Description
Game Type*	Type of game your container is associated with
Container Name*	Name of your container, max. 50 characters
Container Description*	Description text, max. 255 characters
Item ID	ID value of your item inside your container, must exist
Trap ID	ID of the trap on your container, must exist
Locked	To lock the container
Min. Mind Skill	If you lock the container, set this to a numeric value
Min. Luck Skill	If you lock the container, set this to a numeric value
Next Bldg ID	The container leads to a SubRoom, enter its ID here
Requires Item ID	In order to open the container, this item is required to be in the player's inventory

Minimum values are good because it makes the players strive to meet the requirements. Nothing worse than exploring and finding a room you can't get into!

The NextBldgID is important. This is where you can connect containers (like a door, gate) to a SubRoom. Back to Lou's House example, Lou's broom closet door was a container, and the NextBldgID would be the ID of the Broom Closet SubRoom.

All your ID values will be checked to make sure they exist – so if an item, trap or next building haven't been added yet, either open a new window and add them, or leave the fields blank and edit the container later.

Editing Containers

Editing a container looks the same as adding.

Adding Quests

This screen seems like it should be more complicated, but it isn't. All the hard work has been done in creating the items, traps, containers, buildings and subrooms – plus the plot for your quest.

I'll explain the fields below:

Field Name	Description
Game Type*	Type of game the quest is for
Quest Name*	Name of the quest, max. 100 characters
Quest Description*	Quest description, 10,000 chars (lots) give background info here
Quest Item ID	Quest item, must exist of you give one (player will get this and return it to the quest giver. The quest giver will take the item from them)
Start Bldg ID*	The building where the quest is given
End Bldg ID*	The building where the quest item will reside (kind of redundant)
XP Gain*	How much XP the player will gain
Money Gain*	How much money they will receive for completing the quest

End Bldg ID was a good idea originally; I am not using it in the grand scheme of things at the moment. The quest ends when then player finds your quest item. The system may not care if the End Bldg ID is the same as the building where your quest item resides.

Your quest must have a different End Bldg ID than the Start Bldg ID. Not much of a journey when it's in the same building!

Currently players can only complete a quest once per character. So a player could do the quest on a 2nd character and then go give the item to a player, sell it etc.

Editing Quests

Editing a quest, same as adding, just changing values. All IDs will be checked to ensure they exist.

Assembling a Quest

When I make a quest I do the following steps

1. Download a quest worksheet from the site
2. Work for days/weeks on NPC content, quest content
3. Lay out all my content in the quest worksheet, double check it
4. enter my quest data in this order, items, traps, containers, buildings, subrooms, quest data
5. I go back to my quest worksheet and write down the IDs of all the pieces and then walk through my quest to make sure all the pieces are connected correctly
6. I run one of my characters through the quest a few times to make sure it works, then I up the skill levels to make it interesting ☺

Adding Traps

Everyone loves a good trap. Adding traps is pretty straightforward. Currently base damage is not being used, but is required, so just enter 0, or 1000 – so when I do implement it, your trap will smoke the daylights out of someone who trips it ;)

Here is some basic information about the fields:

Field Name	Description
Game Type*	Type of game your trap is for
Trap Name*	Name of trap, max. 50 characters
Trap Description*	Description for trap, max. 255 characters
Base Damage*	Not currently used, Dmg values are used instead, enter 0
Min. Mind Skill*	Minimum skill level required to probe
Min. Luck Skill*	Minimum skill level required to probe
Xp Gain*	Amount of XP earned for triggering with probe
Dmg Health	Amount of health deducted
Dmg Fatigue	Amount of fatigue deducted
Dmg Str	Amount of strength deducted
Dmg Mind	Amount of mind deducted
Dmg Luck	Amount of luck deducted

Minimum skills are required to probe the trap successfully. The game has a random fail 30% of the time even if the player stats are at max – need to make it interesting and struggle a bit.

The damage stats fields, you can assign values to one or all of these – traps like my favorite (Massive Blast) smoke the player for every stat!

Note: Traps have the ability to have their own sound effects (wav, or very small mp3 files). If you have a sound that you want associated with your trap – please email me the file (email at the top of this document) after you have added your trap, and I will link it into your trap. Otherwise there is a default sound for all traps.

Editing Traps

Looks the same as adding one.

Sharing Items and Traps

You may have noticed, but only your items, traps etc are shown to you. I may make all items and traps available via another screen at some point – because I would like players to be able to use other player-made things. But since I am looking for unique content to build the world – for now you can only see what you've created (unless you ask a player for the ID values of some traps and items – maybe some smart cookie will create a secret chatroom where 'devs' can talk and share trap info.) Remember chatroom clear messages older than 4 hours...

Note About Adding Description Field Content

When you make your item, trap, container, building descriptions, the text field in the web page isn't the best place to write a lot of content. I'd recommend using Word or some program with spell-check.

One note about Word. When you copy content directly from Word and paste it into the textfield on the web site – sometimes Word has 'special' characters (like hyphens and double quotes) that don't copy across. This can cause formatting issues when your content is displayed in a web page.

A way around this is: Write your content in Word, spell-check it, then save your Word document as a Text (.txt) file. Then copy the content from this text file and paste it into the web page. A text file will remove all Word formatting.

If you do wish to liven up your content by using HTML tags, here's a link that will show you the basics:

<http://www.usd.edu/trio/tut/html/index.shtml>

Removing Data

Currently, because I am trying to build game content, you can't delete anything you create (items, traps, buildings etc). You can however reuse anything you make – as in rename, reset values etc. Eventually I will allow the deletion of things your create.