

MERCENARY



Mercenary—Game Description

In Mercenary, you take the role of a 21st Century soldier of fortune crash-landed on the strife-torn planet Targ. Your intergalactic craft, Prestinium, is beyond repair.

The action focuses mainly on Planet Targ's major areas of habitation, which are virtually deserted now following many years of war between the usurper Mechanoids, an alien race of robots, and Targ's original occupants, the peace-loving Palyars. You will most likely become embroiled in this continuing conflict.

Your challenge is to escape from the planet, having first discovered the means to do so. This can be achieved in differing ways, depending on the various approaches to the game that you may take. How and when you escape is entirely in your own hands. But as you gain experience in beating the system, you may wish to optimise your spoils of war.

For assistance, you can rely on Benson, your in-helmet ninth generation personal computer. Benson displays your guidance systems and provides an interpretation for your view of events in three-dimensional vector graphics. In addition, Benson is able to identify and take into your possession a number of the objects that can be found. Many of these will be useful to your eventual escape.

High in orbit above Targ, you can find the Palyar Colony Craft, where the vestiges of this once proud and peaceful race have plotted their revenge against the Mechanoid occupation.

How then to escape? You lack the communication range to call for help from your friends. And, in your business, friends cost money. You don't have much at the moment.

And so you begin.....

Escape From Targ

On arrival, in this, the original Mercenary game, you are conveniently located within Central City. From here you set out to learn the mysteries of Targ. We would suggest that you gain a thorough understanding of this game before moving on.

The Second City

Definitely not the place for a beginner! This additional dataset for the original game is designed to present a really tough challenge for experienced Mercenary players.

You crash-land again, but in the eerie red dusk of Targ's southern hemisphere. You're in the Second City. Here, every trick in the book has been used in a conspiracy to hinder your escape. You face a new degree of complexity where all is certainly not as it would seem.

GOOD LUCK!

WARNING: SKILLED ADVENTURERS MAY PREFER NOT TO READ THIS IMMEDIATELY

Helpful Hints—Escape from Targ

To begin by stating the obvious: Do read all instructions carefully as there are clues. The serious escapee will also take notes of relevant findings during exploration.

So, where to start? As a beginner, we suggest you follow Benson's prompt and buy the Dominion Dart so conveniently to hand. Fly anywhere without constraints and no penalty, even if you crash!

Surface structures are identifiable from below 500m altitude, but are best appreciated from below 100m. Learn to navigate using the compass and Benson's invaluable Location Indicator. The City area is located within co-ordinates 0-15 x 0-15. But, do not overlook wasteland exploration as there are places of interest out there.

You're unlikely to resist zapping anything for too long. Fire at the base of ground objects to initiate a spectacular collapse. Later on, you may be able to 'put the clock back' and perform a repair job. But for now it's too late. On this occasion, your aggression is detected. The respondent, Palyar or Mechanoid, depends on who is in possession of the site you have zapped. Worth noting? There is an alternative way of detecting site ownership.

You're ready to go underground via an elevator cage. You choose the one at Location 09.06 as you were directed there by the Palyars promising gainfull employment. Leave your craft and walk off to explore the complex; an early objective: the Palyar Briefing Room.

In your exploration, you will come across locked doors. There are 'keys' of matching shapes, but these are rarely conveniently to hand. There are also doors with special cross-markings. These access Transporter Rooms, which are a good way to get around. Some (marked with one diagonal) go just one way. There are other links (apparently two-way) that seem quite unreliable. Transporter room types are colour coded, but only from the inside. These links provide a means of entry to all seven underground hangar complexes.

Are you ready now to go up to the Palyar Colony Craft, that 'dot' in the sky? If your ship lacks the extra power to reach it, you must have overlooked an important item. Otherwise, on gaining an altitude of 65,000m, there it is!

So you beaver away to amass some wealth. It may be that you choose to pay for your escape from Targ. Good fun as an exercise—and with the Game Save facility to make things easy, (before cash changes hands), why not? But a thorough exploration of Targ will yield a craft for free. Or what about that Palyar 'special gratitude'? The challenge is not just to escape, although that is an achievement: As a true Mercenary, you'll want to leave with all the wealth that you can. 1,909,000CR is tops for Central City; 9,000,000 from the Second City!

Unhelpful Hint—The Second City

Triangular doorways which appear regularly at places of interest give access to the 'author's cheat-room'. Unfortunately, he has the key!

MERCENARY LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

For C64 and Atari computers use joystick port 2, Plus/4, port 0. Check cassette for multi-formats and insert in recorder with the label for required format facing up. Rewind fully.

C64/128 Press <**SHIFT**> and <**RUN/STOP**> keys simultaneously. (**Plus/4** type **LOAD** and press <**RETURN**> key.)
Press <**PLAY**> button on recorder as then directed. Mercenary will fast-load with **NOALOAD** and autorun.

Atari Press recorder <**PLAY**> button to lock in down position;
Hold down computer <**START**> button and turn on power switch.
Following 'bleep' sound, press <**RETURN**> key.

Amstrad (With disk drive present, type ! **TAPE (Note ! = <SHIFT> @)**)

Spectrum Type J followed by **SYMBOL SHIFT P** twice. (ie **LOAD** ")
Press **ENTER** and press **PLAY** on recorder.

On completion of load, you are asked to select Joystick or Keyboard options. You are not able to change the option once the game is commenced. Press required number from screen menu selection to begin the game.

Spectrum Keyboard Controls

To fire, **0**. Keys **5-8** select direction for walking (and flight). **5** = Left, **6** = Forwards (Climb), **7** = Backwards (Dive), **8** = Right. Use also **5 & 6**, **5 & 7**, **6 & 8**, and **7 & 8** for intermediate directions.

GAME SAVE

In both 'Escape From Targ' and 'The Second City', you can save out a current gameplay to pick up later from where you left off.

Remove your copy of Mercenary before proceeding further, and use a separate data cassette that is write-enabled.

Press <**CNTRL**> and '**S**' simultaneously. (Spectrum <**CAPS SHIFT**> **S**)

Benson Response: **SAVE NO. 0-9?** (Spectrum **1-4**)

Enter a number in this range to identify saved file.

Benson Response: **PRESS RETURN WHEN READY** (Spectrum <**ENTER**>)

Check that your saves tape is correctly positioned.

(For Atari, Benson Response: **GAME SAVE?** Press **Y** then as follows)

Press <**PLAY**> and <**RECORD**> together on your cassette recorder.

Press <**RETURN**> to save your gameplay. (Spectrum <**ENTER**>)

Other keys pressed will abort save, or a procedure error will 'time out', and return you to the game.

Notes: Saves from disk and cassette formats of the game, or from other computer versions or other language versions are incompatible.

Saves from 'Escape From Targ' and 'The Second City' will not load and play one from the other.

TO RE-LOAD GAMESAVE

At any point in a game /following completion of the opening 'crash' sequence), to re-load a previously saved gameplay:

Press <**CNTRL**> and '**L**' simultaneously. (Spectrum <**CAPS SHIFT**> **L**)

Benson Response: LOAD NO. 0-9? (Spectrum **1-4**)

Press your required save file number.

Benson Response: PRESS RETURN WHEN READY

Check that the tape is correctly positioned.

(For Atari, Benson Response: GAME LOAD? PRESS **Y** then as follows)

Press <**PLAY**> on recorder and <**RETURN**> to load. (Spectrum <**ENTER**>)

Notes: Difficulty can be experienced with 'remote' cassette recorders. Trial and error may be required to establish a suitable volume setting for your equipment. To abort a load failing to find a required file, Spectrum owners should press <**SPACE KEY**>, otherwise, and on other formats, a failed load will 'time out' and return you to the original gameplay.

LOADING THE SECOND CITY

Your Second City Cassette is constructed as a 'Game Save'.

First load your 'Escape From Targ' cassette.

Following the opening 'crash' sequence, place your Second City cassette in recorder, with label for required format facing up. Rewind fully.

Follow the procedure for loading a Game Save as above;

On Benson Response: SAVE NO. 0-9? Press **0**. (Spectrum, **1** Atari, **Y**)

Targ Survival Kit For Central City

Enhance your game of 'Escape From Targ' with the Targ Survival Kit:

A full-colour Tourist Map guides you to places of interest on the surface in Central City. Plans from the Palyar archives map six of the underground complexes and provide a detailed layout of the Colony Craft above. There's a vehicle specification sheet and a host of hints and clues in the novelette 'Mercenary—Interlude on Targ'. Just send a note of your name and address and a Cheque or Postal Order, payable to 'Novagen Software Ltd), for £3.95 * (inclusive of Postage and Packing in the UK).

Send to:

NOVAGEN SOFTWARE LTD., **FREEPOST** 142 ALCESTER ROAD, BIRMINGHAM B13 8HS

NO STAMP REQUIRED IN UK!

* In mainland Europe, please send Eurocheque for £4.50.

Overseas: Please send Cheque for £5.00 to include for air-mail post.

KEYBOARD SUMMARY

Press Key/(s) as shown
If two, simultaneously

Notes & Variations

Respond YES	Y	Otherwise 'NO' is assumed
Board Vehicle	B	Position at centre of vehicle
Forward Power Keys	1-9	0 = Maximum: Spectrum 1-4
Reverse Power Keys	<SHIFT> 0-9	Spectrum <SYMB SHIFT> 1-4
Increase Power	+	Amstrad → : Atari >
Decrease Power	-	Amstrad ← : Atari <
Stop	<SPACE>	For hover in flight
Leave Vehicle	L	
Operate Elevator	E	At centre of surface cage or Colony Craft pad or in hangar
Take Object	T	Pick up from centre
Drop Object	D	
Quit Situation	<CNTRL> Q	Spectrum <CAPS SHIFT> Q Amstrad <CNTRL> <ESC>
Save Gameplay	<CNTRL> S	Spectrum <CAPS SHIFT> S
Load Gameplay	<CNTRL> L	Spectrum <CAPS SHIFT> L

CONTROLS

Please see **Keyboard Summary** for operating instructions

Bensons Panel

ELEVATION	Registers your in-flight up/down attitude to the horizontal.
COMPASS	Registers at all times your upright horizontal direction
ALTITUDE	Gives your in-flight height in Metres.
SPEED	Gives your speed of motion on board any vehicle.
LOCATION	Whilst on or above the surface of Targ, your co-ordinate position is given relative to a city as follows: Black figures 00-99 (West to East) x 00-99 (North to South) Red (or reversed) figures indicate a negative co-ordinate. ** indicates that you are out of range.

Benson provides information and relays incoming messages on the Communications Panel. With Benson in communication mode, you may be asked to respond. Press 'Y' to respond YES, otherwise 'no' is assumed. Various Benson models display additional status indicators.

Walking

Walking is initiated by use of the joystick and directed as shown:



Transport

There are two types of ground based vehicles (GBV's) and three types of flight craft. All have varying capabilities. They operate with a range of speeds, including fine adjustment, both forwards and reverse. Flight craft can also hover. There is also one intergalactic craft. GBV's are directed by use of the joystick as shown:



FLIGHT CRAFT need sufficient speed to take off. On the ground they behave as GBV's but are controlled for direction in flight by the joystick as shown:



Elevators

Underground complexes are accessible from the surface. Locate a three-sided cage and position yourself, or your craft, on the surface within the cage before operating. (See Keyboard Summary).

There is also an elevator entrance on the top surface of the 'sky city' Colony Craft. Position yourself on the square pad adjacent to the landing strip to gain entrance to the hangar below.

Combat

In any vehicle, outside of a hangar, depress the joystick 'fire' button to launch your missile. To destroy ground installations, fire at their base. If you are under attack, this is relentless. Unless you can knock out the enemy craft, it will ultimately find you and home in for the kill.

Objects

A number of objects can be picked up and carried under Benson's control. Not all of these are useful. You can carry up to ten objects at any one time. Objects are placed down in reverse order; the last taken is the first dropped.

Quit Option

Mercenary could potentially play for ever. You will never be 'killed', although there are penalties if your craft is hit by a missile. This, and other conditions, can leave you in a position of having to walk, possibly for hours, to regain a vehicle or reach an underground complex. And there can be other irretrievable situations. But you can quit to opt out. (See Keyboard Summary). You will be returned to a city location in possession of a new craft. BUT there is a penalty: Any objects that you hold will be scattered around.