

Defense Grid: The Awakening

1. Story



The invasion began without warning.

After a thousand years of peace, the aliens have returned.

The planet's survival depends on activating the ancient Defense Grid...if it still functions at all.

2. Objective

Defense Grid: The Awakening is a strategy game where you place defensive fortifications (towers) to stop invading aliens from stealing your power cores. It's up to you to select the towers, placement, and timing to best protect your base.

If you can make it through the alien invasion and finish the mission with one or more cores remaining, you will earn a bronze medal and other missions and modes will be unlocked for you to play. Gold and silver medals are awarded for protecting more cores and spending the least amount of resources possible to win.

3. Steam Account

Defense Grid: The Awakening includes several features that work in conjunction with a free Steam account and an installed free Steam client on your computer. The game can be played without a Steam account, but then you will not have access to achievements, stats, regular leaderboards, or friend leaderboards.

Login to your Steam account through the Steam client prior to starting the game (this is often automatic). Upon launch, the game will use your unique ID to register your achievements and statistics to your account as well as upload your high score for any particular map and mode. It will also access your friends list and display the high scores of your friends on both the main mission selection screen and in the leaderboards section of the game.

4. Main Menu

Leaderboards

If you are connected to Steam when you initiate the game, you will see a leaderboard for each game map and each game mode per map. The leaderboard can show your high score with respect to all others who are playing the game as well as relative to those on your friends list.

Achievements

This button launches the Steam client and shows the achievements that you have earned while playing the game.

Help and Options

The Help and Options screen provides access to the How to Play manual, Encyclopedias, Control settings, Options settings and Credits.

Controls

The controls page has three tabs, one for mouse, keyboard, and controller. The mouse page shows the mouse layout and has a sensitivity slider that the user can adjust. The keyboard page shows the default primary (left-handed) and secondary (right-handed) key mappings and also allows the user to adjust those mappings as they desire.

Settings

The audio page has four volume sliders: a master volume slider, a music volume slider, a sound effects volume slider, and a voice dialogue volume slider. Settings are saved once the save button is pressed at the bottom of the screen.

The video page has three list boxes for resolution, quality, and mode. The mode box toggles full-screen or windowed display. Performance is typically increased if full-screen is chosen over windowed. Lowering resolution settings also typically increases performance.

The three choices for quality are low, medium, and high. The low mode will use textures, effects, lighting and shadows that work best with older or lower-memory graphics cards. Medium graphics mode activates some additional lighting effects, while High mode enables advanced texturing, shadowing, and lighting effects. Chose High only if your video card supports the shader 3.0 standard and you have more than 1GB of system memory.

The interface settings page allows you to turn audio subtitles on or off and also turn on or off game play tips.

5. Interface

Mission Selection

The mission selection screen displays the unlocked and locked maps of the game at the top of the screen and provides a short description about each map. Navigation arrows to the left and right of the map display can be clicked on with the mouse to move to earlier or later maps.

Only unlocked maps will have active selection buttons which allow you to play that map in story mode or one of the other challenge modes. Completing a map in story mode unlocks the challenge mode buttons for that map and the story mode button for the next map in the story progression.

Should you have Steam running on your computer with an active account, you will see an abbreviated leaderboard of friend high scores in the bottom right of the screen. This allows you to compare your best effort to those of your friends. If you want to see a full leaderboard with all of the scores from your friends who have played the game, click on the Leaderboards button on the Main Menu.

Play



Available resources are shown in the upper left. After initial resources are spent, additional resources are gained through the destruction of the alien invaders. If you have unspent resources, you will be awarded more over time. The more unspent resources you have, the more you'll gain.

The status of your power cores is shown in the upper left. Green indicates a core is safe, amber means stolen but recoverable, and red means the core has been lost.

Tactical Recon is shown at the top of the display. The alien's special powers are reflected in the icon, and the color represents their strength level from weakest to strongest: green, amber and red.

The cursor turns green on a tower door where towers can be built, and will be red elsewhere.

Mission Summary

At the end of each game session, a score will be shown based on how well you played the mission. The score is calculated based on the number of remaining cores, the amount of resources you ended the map with, and the ending value of the towers you built.

Other statistics including the number of towers built and sold and the number of enemies killed will also be available. Use the tabs to move left and right between different statistic summary pages.

6. Controls

Cursor movement

Move the mouse to pan your view (or use the up, down, left, and right keys). There are three heights you can play from. Rotate the mouse wheel to move between them. There are also keyboard shortcuts for zooming in and out. You can play the game high above the world, seeing most of the map, at a medium height surveying a section of the world, or zoomed in closer on a specific area.

Building a tower

To build a tower, Left-click the mouse on a tower door location where the cursor is green. A menu showing the tower building options will appear on the left side of the screen. Scroll through those options using the mouse wheel or up and down movement of the mouse. Left-click the mouse to choose the selected tower to be built.

Upgrading a tower

Left-click a tower and select Upgrade to increase the tower's capabilities. Green level base towers can be upgraded to amber level towers. Red level towers are much more powerful, but are very expensive. The level of the tower can both be seen by the color of the tower's range circle as well as in the illumination on the sides and base of the tower.

Selling a tower

You may Left-click a tower and then select Sell to recover some resources from a tower. A tower can be sold when in need of resources in order to recover 75% of the resources that were spent to construct the tower. A tower can also be sold when wanting to change the path of the aliens or wanting to place a different kind of tower in the same location.

Orbital Laser

Once the Orbital Laser is available, press and hold the 'L' key to fire the orbital laser at the location of the cursor. Releasing it early will abort the firing sequence. Resources cannot be salvaged from aliens destroyed by the orbital laser.

Alien Info

The inspection window shows the status of an alien's health as well as shield strength if applicable. Right-click on an alien to bring up the information window.

Saving Progress

The game will automatically save at predetermined checkpoints. If you are defeated, you will be able to resume at the last checkpoint. You can also go back to earlier saved checkpoints by pressing the backspace key.

If you exit a mission before it ends, your progress will be saved. When you return you will have the option of resuming where you left off. If you choose to restart a mission instead of resuming it you will lose any previous save games stored for that mission.

Tactics Display

Pressing 'T' also shows alien flight paths in addition to tower ranges and entry and exit arrows.

Speeding up

Holding the 'F' key will speed up the action.

7. Aliens



Fast Aliens

Fast aliens hover and move much faster than others. They are more susceptible to laser and fire damage than other alien types because they will continue to burn even after they have raced past the tower.



Shielded Aliens

Some aliens have shields protecting them. Beam weapons may be ineffective or less effective on shields until those shields are destroyed by projectile weapons. After the shield is destroyed, the alien is susceptible to damage from all weapons.



Flying Aliens

Flying aliens follow a different path than other aliens, and will head to the cores before exiting. Their flight path will be illuminated at the start of a mission and can be shown at any time by bringing up the Tactics display. Power cores captured by flying aliens cannot be recovered.



Spawning Aliens

Spawning aliens are able to deploy additional aliens on the map. Some spawning aliens create portals which teleport other aliens to the location of the portal. Other aliens internally protect a group inside of them and release that group when the protector is killed.



Stealth Aliens

Stealth aliens cannot be seen at a distance by most towers and will only be detected without aid when near a tower. For long range towers such as the Cannon and Meteor towers, stealth aliens are practically undetectable. The command tower will help illuminate stealth aliens within its range allowing other towers to see those aliens.



Drone

Drones serve as test targets to ensure proper functioning of the tower defense system.



Swarmer

The Swarmer is a weak alien which comes in large packs. Area weapons are particularly effective.



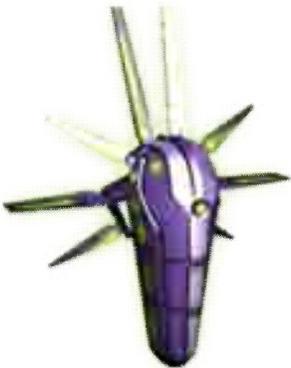
Walker

The Walker is the basic field unit of the alien army. With no particular strengths it is single-minded in its mission. It can carry one core.



Rhino

The Rhino is the basic elite unit of the alien army. It has good armor, and is single-minded in its mission. It can carry two cores.



Racer

The Racer is a fast alien which rushes to the cores as quickly as possible. It is weak against heat, which continues to hurt it even after it leaves targeting range. It can carry one core.



Rumbler

The Rumbler is a fast boss constructed solely to recover power cores as quickly as possible. It is weak against heat, which continues to hurt it even after it leaves targeting range. It can carry three cores.



Dart

The Dart is a small flying alien with poor defense that floats on the air currents directly to the power cores. It can only be targeted by the Gun, Cannon and Missile towers. Cores captured by flying aliens are unrecoverable. It can carry one core.



Manta

The Manta is a flying alien with strong defense that floats on the air currents directly to the power cores. It can only be targeted by the Gun, Cannon and Missile towers. Cores captured by flying aliens are unrecoverable. It can carry one core.



Bulwark

The Bulwark has a protective shield which dissipates incoming damage and is strong against heat-based attacks. Use the Gun or Cannon to whittle it down quickly - once the shield is gone, it is vulnerable. It can carry two cores.



Spire

The Spire is a shielded alien that protects nearby aliens with a projected shield. The shield dissipates incoming damage and is strong against heat-based attacks. A Gun or Cannon will whittle the shared shield down. The Spire can carry three cores.



Lurker

The Lurker can only be detected by towers at close range. A Command tower will expose stealthed enemies in range to nearby towers. Stealth aliens are still susceptible to any area damage they may encounter. It can carry one core.



Decoy

The Decoy projects a stealth field around nearby aliens, hiding them from long range towers. The Decoy itself is not stealthed. Stealthed units are still vulnerable to short-range and area damage. A Command tower will expose stealthed enemies in range. The Decoy can carry two cores.



Seeker

The Seeker periodically summons an unstable portal to the alien home planet. Kill it fast if possible to prevent it from spawning more aliens. The quicker it is killed, the more resources can be recovered from it. It can carry one core.



Turtle

The Turtle contains several aliens that are released when it is destroyed. It can carry three cores, but the enemies inside can potentially carry many more.



Crasher

The Crasher is slow but has a tremendous amount of armor. It has no special vulnerabilities, and it can carry three cores.



Juggernaut

The Juggernaut is slow but has a tremendous amount of armor in addition to a heavy shield. The shield dissipates incoming damage and is strong against heat-based attacks while it lasts. The Juggernaut can carry three cores.

8. Towers

Towers are invincible and have unlimited ammunition. You may place as many as you want as long as you have the resources required.

When selecting a tower, a glowing ring will appear in the build spot indicating the range of the tower.

On certain maps, towers can be placed only along the side of the roads. On other maps, there may be locations where towers can be built right where the aliens are moving. When a tower is built, a force field is created around it. The aliens will avoid walking through the tower force fields unless their path to the cores or the exit is completely blocked.

The use of cleverly placed towers on maps where there are many open building areas can significantly elongate an alien's path towards the cores or the exit. This elongation can give towers more time to target the aliens and can make the towers more effective in destroying the aliens quickly. Directing aliens past the same towers multiple times can also increase the chance that the alien will be destroyed.



Gun

The gun tower makes up in versatility what it lacks in efficiency. It can hit any enemy within range, and is essential for defending against shielded and flying enemies. It is weak vs. groups, but strong vs. shields and good vs. fliers.



Cannon

The cannon tower is powerful but slow inflicting heavy damage at a low rate of fire. It works very well against strong and shielded enemies although its power can be wasted on weak or heavily damaged units. It can't hit enemies directly next to it, and is not very effective at stopping tight groups, but it can target fliers making it a great second row tower.



Inferno

The inferno tower can take out many enemies at once, but is fairly limited in its range. It is especially effective against swarms or any aliens which clump together, but not as powerful vs. single strong aliens. Because it is fire based, it is weaker against shields. It can't target fliers.



Concussion

The concussion tower fires explosive grenades in all directions, decimating everything nearby. There is no better solution when enemies are concentrated in a large dense area, but it is not as effective against single strong aliens or shields. It can't attack fliers.



Meteor

The meteor tower targets ground based units at long range. It fires a superheated fireball that inflicts heavy area damage on impact. The meteor tower can't target units close to it, but it has the longest range of any tower making it an ideal second row tower. It is weaker against fast aliens and can't target fliers.



Missile

The missile tower is the strongest defense against fliers. It can easily take down several aerial units at once at great distances, but can't target ground units at all.



Temporal

The temporal tower emits an energy pulse that disrupts nearby aliens, slowing their movement to a crawl. It's expensive to build, but cheaper upgrades extend its range.



Tesla

The tesla tower fires a powerful energy bolt. It is effective if it has time to charge up since the last discharge. Time without firing greatly increases the amount of damage when it does fire, and each tower upgrade provides an additional charge up capacity. This tower is an effective last line of defense when placed at base exit points. It can't target fliers.



Laser

The laser tower is extremely efficient, burning aliens and causing damage long after they've moved out of range. It works very well against fast enemies, but is useless against shields and flying enemies. Multiple laser towers firing on a single unit are not as effective, so careful placement of laser towers can increase their effectiveness.



Command

The command tower reveals stealthed enemies and increases resource recovery within range. There is little benefit when the ranges of two command towers overlap. You will recover extra resources from any alien that dies within range of the command tower, and any stealthed alien will be revealed.

9. Challenge Modes

Story Challenge

The story mode, but all the aliens are tougher.

10k Resources

You start with 10k with no resource recovery or interest.

Practice

You start with 20k with no resource recovery or interest. Perfect your strategies.

10 Tower Limit

You can only have 10 towers in play at any time.

Single Core

There is only a single core in the housing.

Grinder

The walkers just keep coming.

Green Towers Only

Survive with only level one towers available.

10. Credits

Defense Grid: The Awakening

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Thank You from Hidden Path Entertainment

Special Thanks

Ike Lee
Geoff Selzer

Thanks to Valve / Steam

Alden Kroll
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Thanks to IGN / Direct2Drive

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Thanks to Greenhouse & Penny-Arcade

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Thanks to Intel

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Mark Subotnick
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Thanks to Lockergnome.com

Chris Pirillo
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Thanks to Microsoft ATG/GTG/XNA/XDC/XDS/DAM

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Thanks to Neowiz Games

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Thanks to NVIDIA

Jim Black
Rex Sikora

Thanks to Digipen Institute of Technology

Jen Sward

Thanks to Play Testers

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Hobie Formhals
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