The Chaos Engine

Introduction

Prepare for the dark world of The Chaos Engine, a Victorian age of discovery and technology corrupted by a failed experiment with an early computer ; the Chaos Engine.

Choose from six hard-nailed mercenaries, each with their own unique weapons and skills to combat the bizarre monstrosities created by the machine. Those who have the strength and the courage to overturn the Chaos Engine will be remembered.

Menu & Options

You can have a party made up of 1 or 2 human players. A single human-controlled character won't fight alone – the computer-controlled companion sees to that. The action's not as competitive without a second human player, but it's no less frenetic.

Passwords are given at key points during play. They contain details of your characters' performance and position and will save you the bother of playing through the early stages again (you may have missed some of the hidden delights though).

Hiring Characters

There are six characters available for hire, but only two can join the party. Player 1 has first choice of the characters to play. If a second human player is not involved, Player 1 must also choose which character is to be controlled by the computer. Otherwise, Player 2 may choose a character to play.

The left side of the screen will show details of the highlighted character, press the fire button to hire the highlighted character. When both characters have been chosen, the exit button will be highlighted.

Press the fire button to leave this screen and begin play.
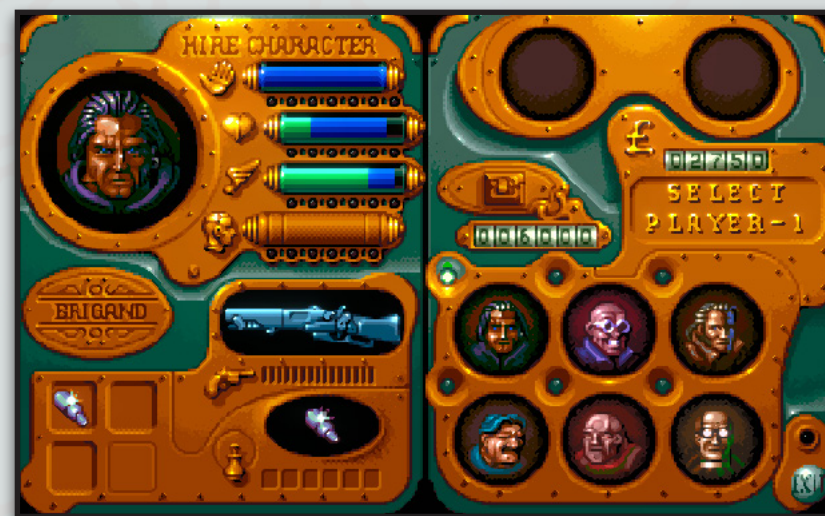
Character Attributes

The characters have their own special abilities and weapons, with their characteristics determined by four variable attributes:
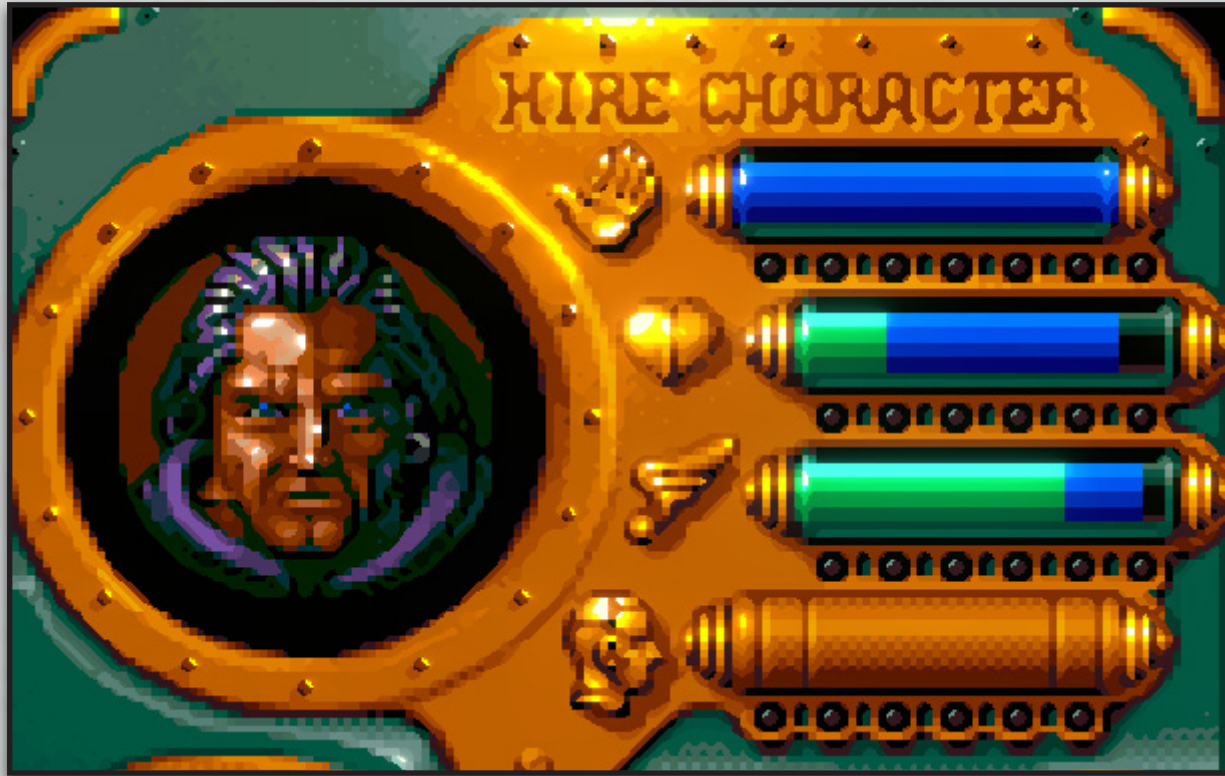
SKILL is perhaps the most important attribute. It's a form of overall rating which affects all attributes and determines when power ups and special abilities will become available.

STAMINA is the character's life force. When this runs out, he's dead.

SPEED is how fast the character can move. Surprised?

WISDOM only applies to computer-controlled characters as it determines their ability to play.

Attributes are boosted by spending cash in the character equip screen.

Playing the Game

It's simple. Push the direction button you want to move in. A single press of the fire button shoots a character's weapon in the direction he's facing.

Pressing the special button will activate the special ability held, providing you have special power. You will hear "SPECIAL ACTIVATED!" when this happens. Each character has a different weapon with different attributes. These attributes can be changed by collecting or purchasing power-ups.

Depending on the character, these may increase the number of shots fired, the damage they do, whether they travel through monsters and the spread of fire. As this happens, the character's shots will change colour to give you an indication that they have increased in power.

Your objective is to turn all of your character's shots red.

There are many different special abilities to be bought in The Chaos Engine, but none of the characters gets to use them all.

When a character has more than one special ability in his inventory, you may change between them by pressing Cycle Special button to rotate through the specials that he has available.

When player 2 is controlled by the computer his special abilities can be used by player 1.

To do this the player must press the Swap button together to swap the special with the computer-controlled player.

Pressing the Cycle Second Player button will cycle through the special abilities held by that player.

Special Abilities also appear as you play - simply walk into one to activate it.

The playfield scrolls, that's to say, as the characters move around the scenery the screen follows to keep up with them.

When a computer-controlled character is left behind off-screen, he will be teleported to the vicinity of player 1's character approximately three seconds after he was lost.

When two human players are involved, the scrolling is averaged between them so an element of co-operation is required to move on. OK?

Shoot the node until its casing explodes and it's activated. You will hear "NODE ACTIVATED!" when you activate a node.

When enough Nodes have been activated the exit to the next level will open (you will hear "EXIT OPEN"). Go for it, unless you feel hard enough to hang around and explore the level further.
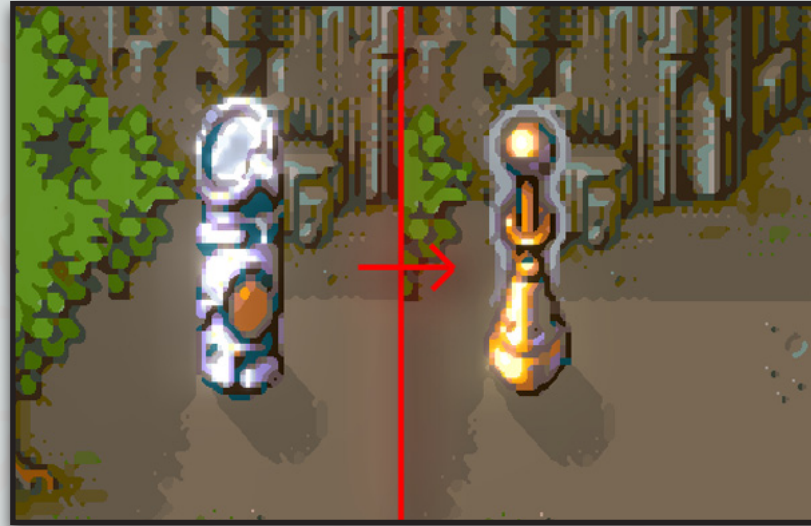
You will hear "LEVEL COMPLETE!" when you pass through the exit. Now, some levels have more than one exit. The node counter on the status panel at the bottom of the screen shows the number of nodes to activate before an exit will open.

If an exit is open and yet there are still nodes to activate, that means an alternative exit exists. Activate the remaining nodes and find it - it will take you to a more advantageous position on the next level.
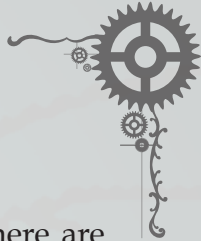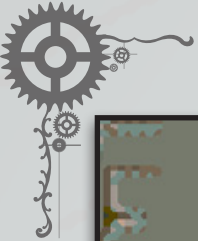
Treasure or Cash?

Dead monsters drop two different values of coinage, and there are often half a dozen or so different types of treasure left lying around on each level.

Pick 'em up quickly before they disappear.

Treasure is added to the party kitty, ready to be distributed between the characters when the level is completed.

Silver keys are essential to completing levels, as they affect the scenery in some way so as to allow progress.
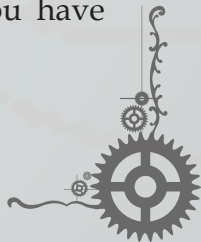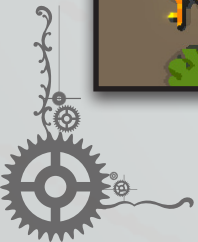

Food comes in tins and provides extra stamina for anyone.

Gold keys are not essential to completing Levels, but greedy people can't do without 'em.

Touching a Death Zone Token saves the player's progress and status. You'll return here if you have lives remaining.

All monsters hold treasures which they leave behind when they are killed. There are about 7 or 8 different types of monster in a world, and it often takes more than a single shot to kill the blighters.

Some monsters spit or shoot deadly projectiles with varying degrees of accuracy. Some monsters run after characters. Some monsters protect items of interest. Some monsters appear from generators (a few well-placed shots or keys will stop a generator from generating monsters).

THE BONUS SCREEN

The bonus screen is displayed when a level is completed. You can see whether you did all you could do within the level.

Also the party kitty - all that treasure you collected during the level- that gets split between the party according to how well the characters performed.

In a one player game, all the cash that has been collected is split equally between the two characters automatically.

The column down the centre of the screen shows small pictures (Icons) representing the six most important elements of a level, with the level total to the far left.

You can see how the two characters performed individually and as a party.

If either of the characters has run out of lives the remaining member of the party is given the chance to buy a life for him after every bonus screen.

The dead character will pay, providing he has enough money, if not the remaining character must make up the difference.

In a two player game you are given the option to answer NO. In a one player game you MUST buy the other player a life.

Customising Characters

The character equip screen is presented after every second and fourth level in a world. Here you can use the cash acquired during play to purchase equipment and boost a character's attributes.

The right side of the screen shows the items for sale. The left side of the screen shows the current status of the character. Player 1's character gets to spend his personal allowance first.

If a second human player is not involved, Player 1 must also equip the computer-controlled player. Otherwise, Player 2's character is equipped by the second player.

Press the fire button to buy the selected item (cash will be reduced accordingly). Once a special ability has been purchased it will be moved into your inventory on the left side of the screen, highlight it and press fire to select it for use during the next level.

When you have finished equipping your character, move the highlight to the EXIT button and press the fire button.

Skill controls can be purchased for your character at any time. When purchased you will notice that the current maximum (brown bar) of your other attributes will increase allowing you to increase their current level (green bar). Power-Ups & different special abilities will also become available at certain skill levels. Note that as skill is an overall rating it means that this level can only be increased once you have also increased all the other attributes and purchased power-ups and abilities.

At the end of each world, when the party has finished buying equipment, a password will be given. Write it down, it holds details of the party's performance. When you next load The Chaos Engine you can register this password and begin play from where the password was given. Please note that a password given during a one player game will only restore a one player game and vice versa.

ENHANCEMENTS

This new version of The Chaos Engine includes some new features found under the Options menu at the top of the screen.

Joystick bindings allows you to modify the input to your own preferences.

Toggle '360 Movement' if you'd like to aim more accurately using an analogue controller.
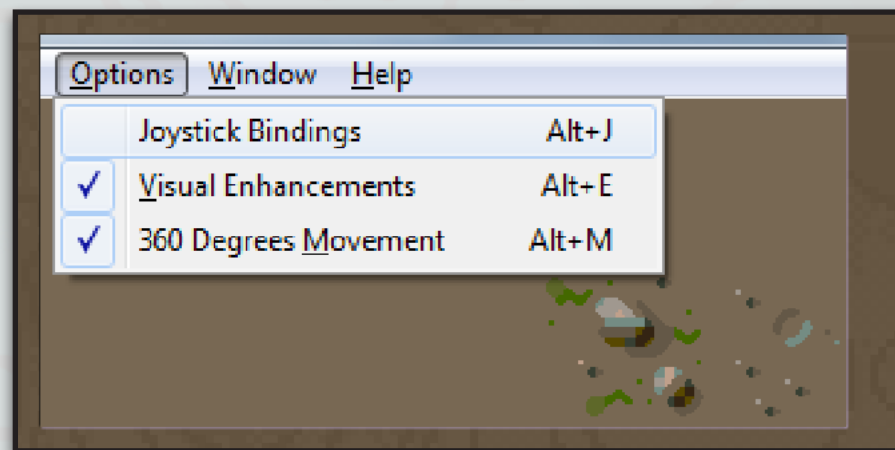
Switch instantly between enhanced visuals and regular visuals by toggling the 'Visual Enhancements' setting.

SUPPORT

We have worked hard to make The Chaos Engine as enjoyable and problem-free as possible, but with thousands of different setups out there, it's inevitable that things will occasionally go wrong.

If you need to contact our Customer Support, you can do so at **support@mastertronic.com**. Or, for the true early 90's experience, you can send a letter to:

Mastertronic Customer Support

2 Stonehill

Stukeley Meadows

Huntingdon

Cambs.

PE29 6ED

United Kingdom

(Please note, modern postage rates will apply.)

Keep up to date with The Chaos Engine on Twitter **@ChaosEngineGame**

CREDITS

MASTERTRONIC

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
MIKE MONTGOMERY

PRODUCER
STUART MORTON

FINAL BOSS
ANDY PAYNE

PRODUCT DIRECTOR
NEIL MCKENNA

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
GARRY WILLIAMS

DIGITAL WISDOM
GRAEME STRUTHERS

ARTWORK
ADAM MARSHALL
ANDREW PARSONS

TESTING
NICK MARSHALL

MARKETING & PR
BEENA PURI
KIRSTY PAYNE

SPECIAL THANKS
HARLEY HOMEWOOD
JORDAN MARSHALL

ABSTRACTION GAMES

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
RALPH EGAS

PROGRAMMERS
ERIK BASTIANEN
RALPH EGAS
RUTGER JANSSEN
WILCO SCHROO

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
TJ'IÈN TWIJNSTRA

ARTISTS
JAY EGAS
MATTHIJS NAHON

BITMAP BROTHERS

IN MEMORY OF
RICHARD JOSEPH
1953 — 2007

DESIGN
SIMON KNIGHT
ERIC MATTHEWS

GRAPHIC DESIGN
DAN MALONE

ADDITIONAL GRAPHICS
HERMAN SERRANO

CODE
STEVE CARGILL

ADDITIONAL CODE
MIKE MONTGOMERY
NICK PELLING

GAME MUSIC & SFX
RICHARD JOSEPH

TITLE MUSIC
JOI

PROJECT MANAGEMENT
GRAEME BOXALL

GAME TESTERS
PRABHU
NAVINO
DAVID W.

WITH THANKS TO
ABBY CAT
THOMPY THOMPSON
SPECIAL AGENT KEEN
BOBBY WATSON
MARK C.

TESTRONIC

HEAD OF QA
ERIK HITTENHAUSEN

ACCOUNT MANAGER
PIETRO FACCIO

FUNCTIONALITY QA
-QA PROJECT LEAD-
LUKASZ BLASZCZAK

- QA TECHNICIANS -
PAWEL KOLNIERZAK
MICHAL KAMOCKI
MICHAL ZAJAC

LOCALISATION QA
- HEAD OF LOCALISATION -
ARNAUD MESSAGER

PROJECT COORDINATOR
ANTONIO GRASSO

LOCALISATION QA TECHNICIANS
FLEUR MARTIN
JANINA SCHLANZE
RAQUEL GÓMEZ GONZALEZ
ALTEVIR DERNOVSEK BOZON
SERGEJ GAVRILOV
DAWID BIEN

COMPATIBILITY QA TECHNICIANS
KRISTOF VANDEBEEK
JOCHEN CAUBERGS

CHAOS ENGINE(C) THE BITMAP BROTHERS 2013