

Building your Empire: a step by step guide



1 First use the map to find a country to take over. You ideally want one with as few enemies as possible, so you've got plenty of time to get the hang of this despotism lark.



2 Your captain only has a few troops and one tower under his command. To check your man's current status click once on his medals.



3 Clicking anywhere on the current land lets you spy on the Island. You need to find if they have any food, defenders, workshops or boats. They all may be useful later.

POWERMONGER

ELECTRONIC ARTS ■ £29.99 Mouse

The big quake shook the world's power structure to its foundations. Not only was the land reformed but the fragile alliances that ensured peace were shattered. Now three new leaders want to take over by usurping your rightful place as the future king. They have already exploited the natural disaster to grab many of your holdings, but, with great skill and cunning, it may just be possible to reconquer the world land by land.

In each of the 195 separate lands you have, under your control, a small band of loyal troops. Each is lead by a captain, who exercises absolute power on your behalf.

They are icon-oriented agents who will rebuild your empire. In the tougher lands, they also recruit sub-captains, who they control, to help overcome the manifold problems that lay on the road to power.

As Far as the Eye Can See

All of a captain's actions are acted out on a magnified section of a relief map, which is displayed on the table in front of them. It details what is happening in a land and can be zoomed in on to aid decision making. The captains are displayed as red-caped figures accompanied by a small body of troops who doggedly obey every order.

You are a Powermonger and you give orders to the 'Boss' captain who relays the command to subordinate captains, who then detail their men to do the deed. Messages are carried by pigeon which proves that Powermonger is a game of strategy not speed.

A land is captured when your captain controls two thirds of the population. Strategy involves winning the hearts and minds of the folks by kindness or alliance, and then by putting everyone to the

sword. Either way your enemies are robbed of manpower and you win. Once a majority is achieved that land is yours and the game pitches another, more difficult, country your way.

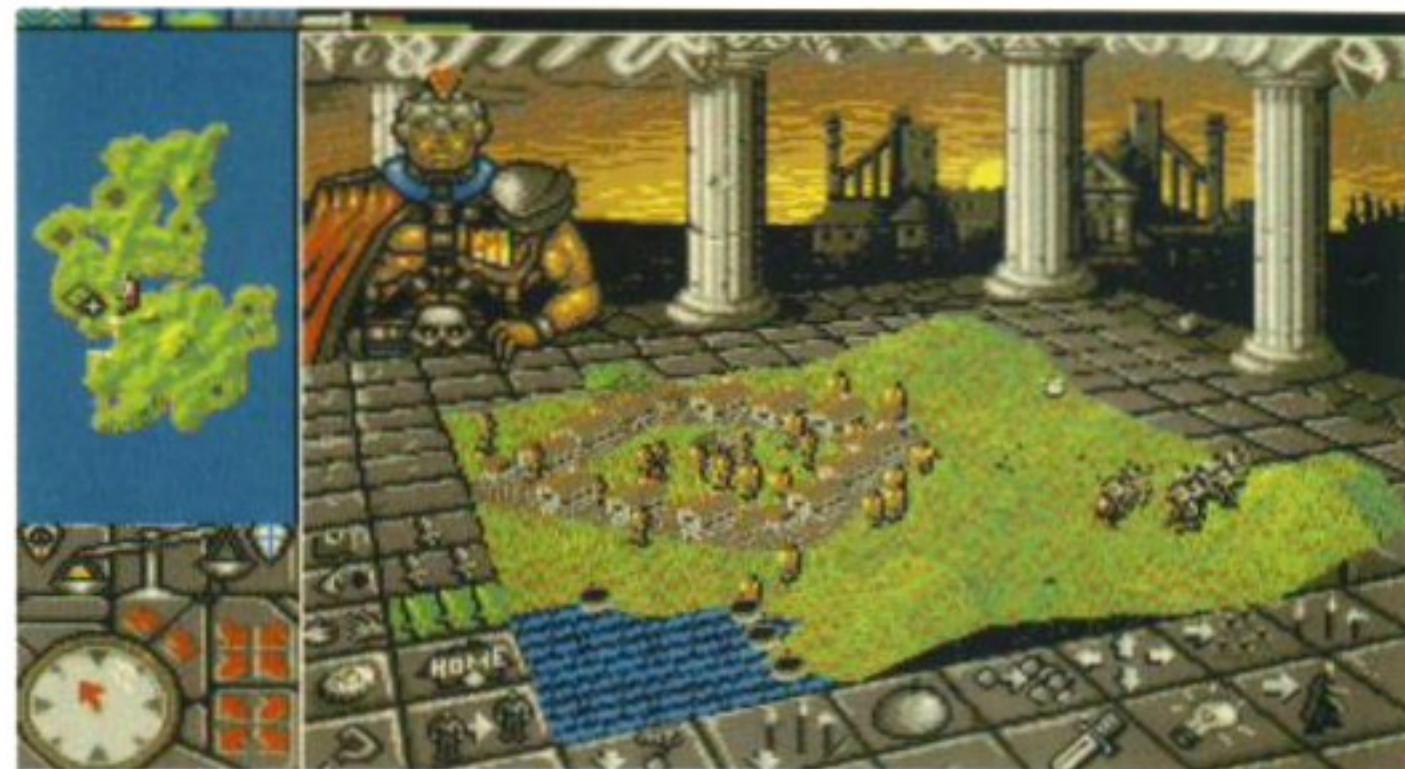
New lands must be conquered with a fresh captain.

Peace Bread and Land (Well Maybe)

Each land is constituted of peasants, towns and other armies. The peasants, suffering their historical



4 You give your orders to your two captains. They in turn tell your troops (the little guys wearing white) what to do. It may seem like a long-winded system, but look on the bright side it keeps you well away from the battlefield and all those nasty sword things. Thing is, you have to send orders by carrier pigeon and they take ages ...



5 Your team - in the white away strip - are attacking the reds. You have bows and pikes but they have a severe numbers advantage. Your troops do have better training and so can be considered to be 50% better than their bumpkin opponents. It still pays to be as aggressive as possible, though, when the odds are this bad.

The leader now wants to get inventing in the workshop. What he produces depends on the village, who is present and his aggression rating.

Having invented pikes the whole crew's packed. The one pike left over can either be stored or taken for a future recruit. The boys wait in camp.

Fully armed it is time to hit the second village and claim the entire island. Via the attack icon the army is told to go and give the village 'a taste of cold steel'.

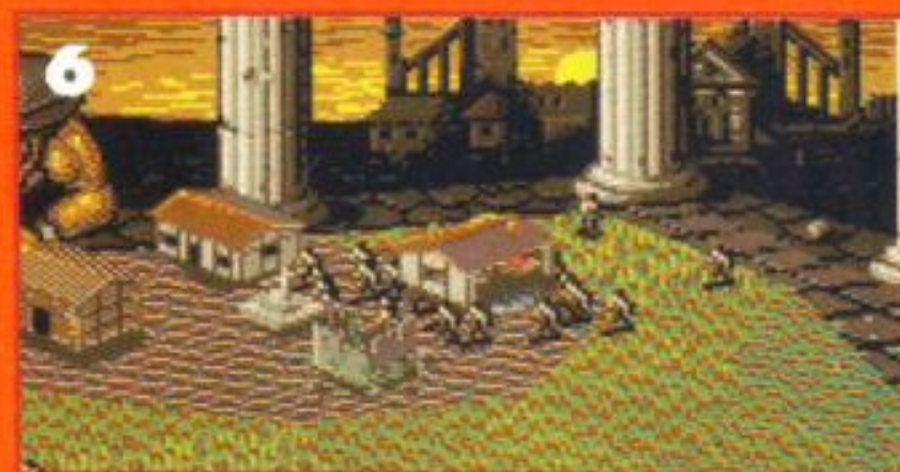




4 Having determined that the town is weak and has a workshop, attack! To move the army send the captain via the 'move' icon to the place you want to go. Your troops dutifully follow, even when it's raining!



5 Whenever inactive the 'boys' form a circle around their leader. When better equipped they will sit in concentric circles that indicate which weapons they are carrying.



6 Charge! Using the 'attack' command your army defeats the villagers and storms the town. Depending on the aggression rating some of the villagers may be left alive to work for you.

ot supply the food and manpower for conquest. They're a simple bunch who follow the guy with the biggest army. However, until you prove your power they fight for their old captain. Some show of aggression is necessary to win even the smallest 'ville to your cause and depending on the posture (aggression setting) of your

captain they can either be slaughtered or spared for conscription into your own forces.

Captured towns have a number of uses for a budding dictator. They can be raided for food and men or serve as a workshop for building the tools of conquest. Villages can be given food, stockpiles of weapons or de-ranked

(demobbed) troopers to form a stronger defence force and because 'invention' (making stuff) is only possible in workshops, even the buildings become vital to your success in *Powermonger*.

Each game centres on increasing the number of villages under your direct control and weakening rival Powermongers by either war

or alliance. Trade and espionage can also be utilised, where appropriate, to strengthen your grip.

Land of the Little People

Watching the little people go to war on your behalf is fun. They bumble around killing each other,

Continued overleaf

So what do all those icons do?

Disk Options - All the twiddly bits a lord needs eg. multi-play games, replay and pause.

Spy - Sends a captain to gather information on opposing force's town.

Alliance - Lets you join forces with other captains.

Trade - Allows trade with parties who you have not fought. Trade may be for weapons or goods, depending on the captain's posture and the surplus stock they carry.

Query - Allows you to check out buildings and who controls them.

Posture (aggressive, neutral, passive) - The more swords the more aggressive a captain is. It ranges from one to three.

Go home - Sends a captain back to his home town while keeping the army intact. A useful way for wimping out of battles!

Transfer men - Reassigns men from one captain to another. The number transferred depends on the captain's posture.

Drop food - Leaves a cache of food in a friendly village for later.

Get food - Sends your army into a friendly village to gather food. How much they take depends on the captain's posture.

Supply food - Sends a captain to drop food at a chosen location.

De-rank - Depending on the captain's posture a proportion of his army are disbanded.

Get men - Recruits men to a captain's army.

Equip invention - Once invented objects must be collected. Some villages also have goodies that can be liberated this way.

Drop invention - Drops surplus stock in a friendly village.

Attack - The level of aggression is determined by the captain's posture.

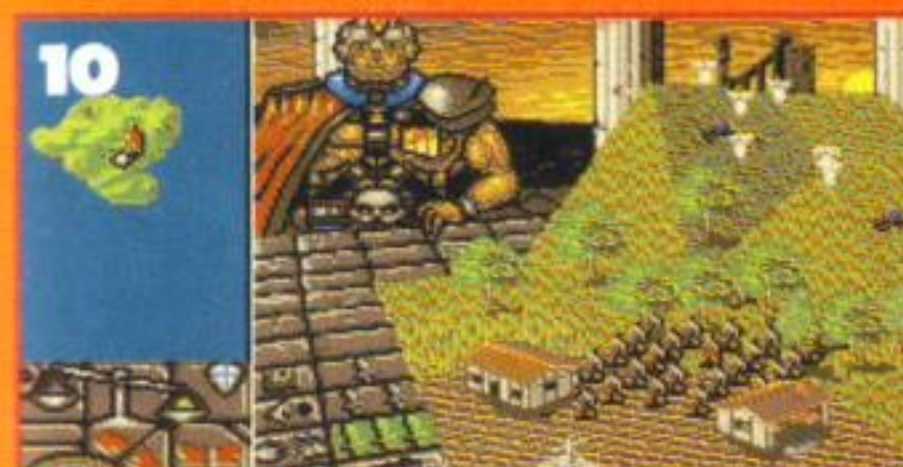
Send Captain - Commands captain to move. His men automatically follow.

Invent - If there is a workshop in a town a captain controls he can trade goods or weapons.

As your team hit the second village the defeated armies' ghosts are seen floating off heavenward. You now control the whole place. Look at the scales of power, to check.

Check the game options and 'retire'. The victory screen will follow. Then select the continue conquest option from the menu then follows. This will bring up the map screen.

Select 'Continue conquest' and move to any adjacent area. The choice: where in the world is ripe for conquest. Hmmm! Next door looks nice! The knife shows captured areas.

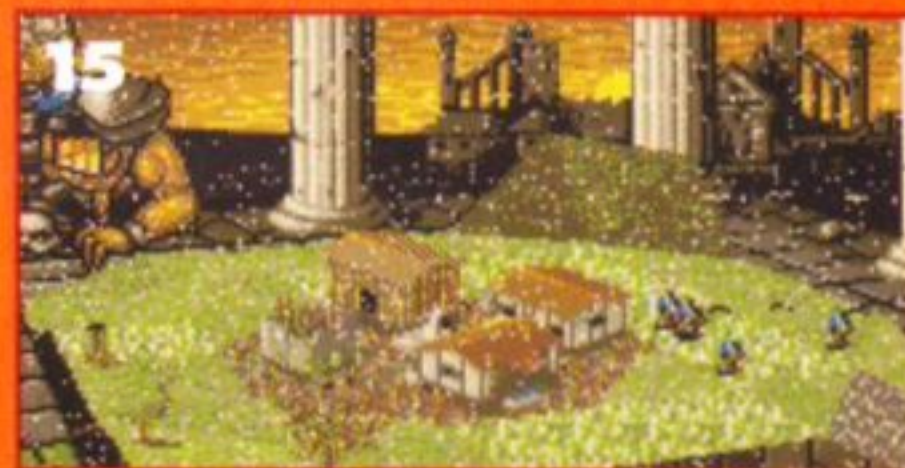




Having arrived you'll find that none of the goodies from the previous land have been carried over. That captain is too busy taking care of his own island. This one must be won from scratch again. Maybe attacking that lone red is a good idea?



It's worth taking the precaution of looking before you leap! Why? Because next door there is a red village that's eager to fight back.



The miffed villagers want to make a fight of it. You're winning but that snow hasn't helped, and your boys are getting cut up.

becoming ghosts, frightening birds, chopping down trees and murdering sheep. They illustrate the implications of your decisions and give life-saving clues. Both the scenery and its inhabitants are interactive with a purpose and history, until you alter destiny's course that is!

The interactive element of the game is also highlighted by your captain's reaction to orders. Each land is an enormous logistic puzzle and certain steps must be taken to ensure success. If you give a captain an order that doesn't readily fit this pattern, or put him in mortal danger, his 'Yeah' acknowledgements become decidedly muted (if he replies at all). An order which fits the pattern however, is greeted with the most enthusiastic reply.

Populous Too!

As the puzzles of each land unravel it becomes clear *Powermonger* is a direct, if very different, descendant of *Populous*. The little people are charming and they make fascinating viewing. Their actions are deliberately slow, imitating the logistical difficulties of conquest.

The world you want to conquer is large and the chunks it comes in frequently seem too big to handle. The parameters are flexible enough to embroil would-be world beaters in battle and trade for years. Yet there are already supplementary-data disks planned.

The drive for world domination will suit those who love clever graphics, amusing sound and masses of gameplay. It takes time to get used to the way this world works. After the initial headaches and frustrated cries, world domination is yours. **Trenton Webb**

Finding out where, how and who you are in Powermonger.

Maps - Contour, settlements, objects and food. Click to get the lowdown on a land.

Red arrow - Shows which captain is currently being given orders.

Current activity - Pictorial representation of the captain's current activity.

Status bars - Blue shows how much food he carries, red how many men and green the captain's personal health (zero = death).

Medals - Click to check a captain's status.

Chest - Click to centre the game map on a captain. It helps avoid confusion.

Overview map - The main map. Click on it and the game map shows a close-up of that area.

Balance of power - The scales show who commands most men.

Rotate map - Useful for getting a good look at the game map.

Move game map - Moves game map in the direction of the arrow.

Zoom in/out - Gives close-ups of the game maps.

Your men - Waiting for an order from the captain at the top of the table.

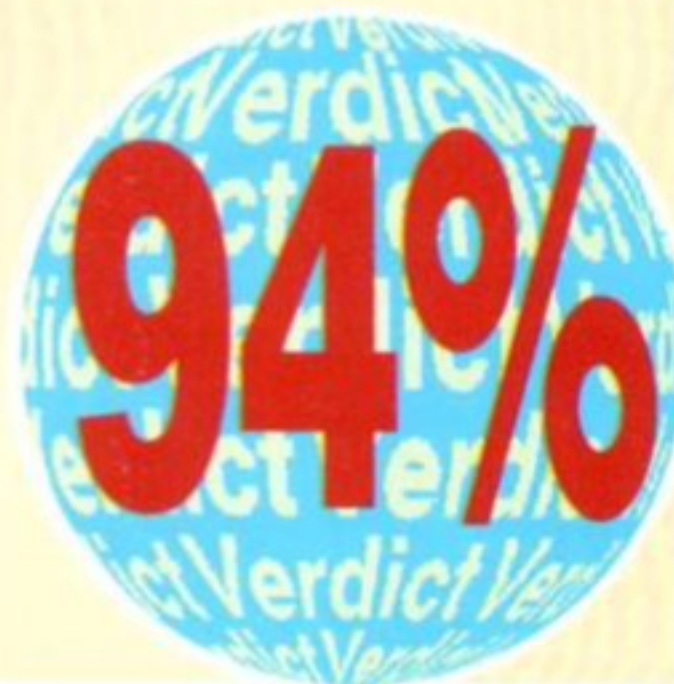
Game display - This is where the game unfolds.

It takes two...

Two human players using two Amigas can monger the power out of each other simultaneously by using a null-modem cable to connect their machines via serial ports. Or if the players are separated by distance a modem connected to the phone will do. Naturally both players will need an original copy of *Powermonger* but it's worth the investment.

VERDICT

- ◆ Stunning marriage of innovative graphics and original game.
- ◆ Highly flexible package of good ideas and game design.
- ◆ Funny, violent and noisy!
- ◆ Initially complex, but persevere it's worth it!
- ◆ With 195 lands to conquer and a datalink option this one will run and run!



Once bitten! It's time to scout around the island. This reveals some major population centres. Maybe somewhere a little smaller would be a better target?

The battle backfires and the scales of power tip against you. There were too many, but empire builders must gamble to win power.

Your *Powermonger* goes down and the last thing he gets to see is the defeat screen. Oh how the mighty fall!

