Star Trek: Armada Map Editor

The Armada Map Editor is actually an Activision tool, although for it officially being a beta software the company wants essentially nothing to do with any damages or liabilities. So in essence you can use it at your own risk. But unless you choose to edit stock game maps, you should be fine. You can get it here:

http://armadafiles.com/files/armada/utilities/mapping-tools/armada-map-editor/details

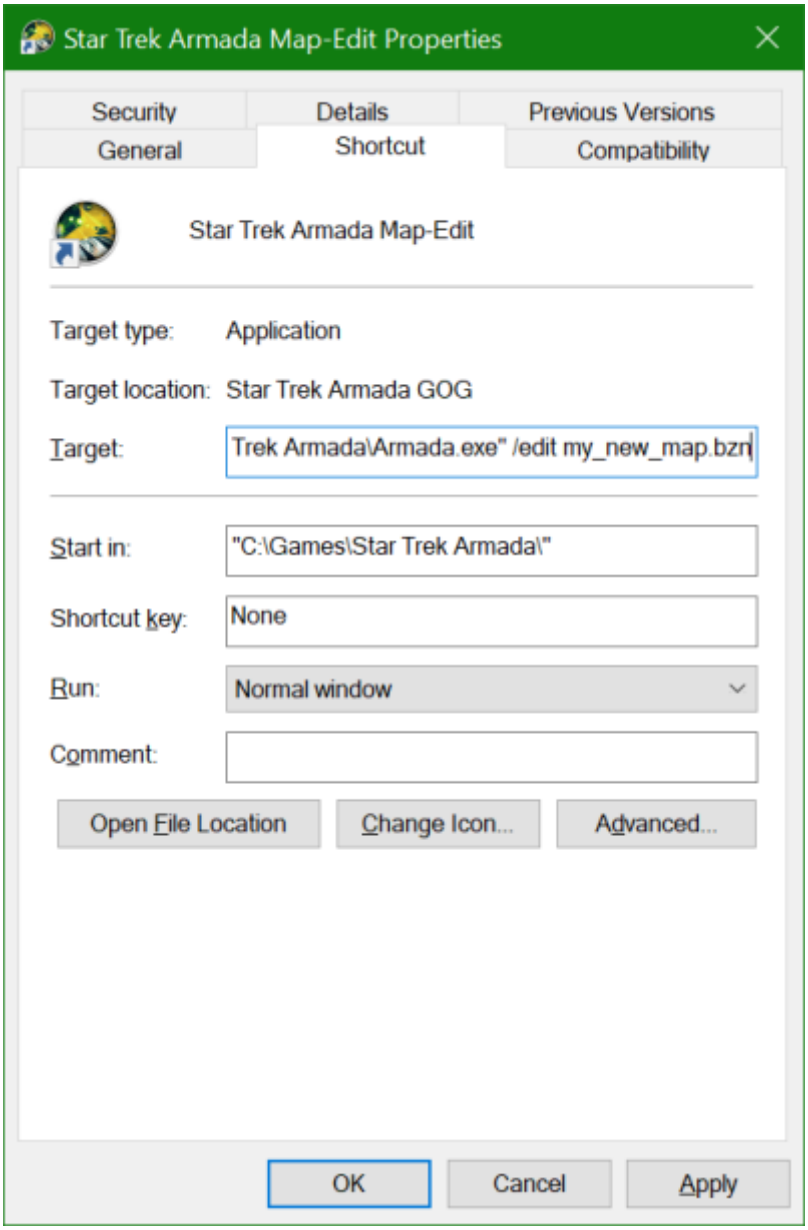
Certain usability aspects require some getting used to. You will find some notes blow on how to use it.

Installation

- Place the *Qedit* file inside the root directory of your Armada installation.
- Create a Windows shortcut to your *Armada.exe* file.
- Edit the just created file and add `/edit <map_file_name>.bzn` to the *Target* line.

The `<map_file_name>.bzn` value should fit the map file name you intend to edit or create.
Example:

```
„C:\Games\Star Trek Armada\Armada.exe“ /edit my_new_map.bzn
```



Filenames should be eight characters or less plus the *.bzn* extension. But it is not necessary to limit the length to eight characters.

You can open files that are present in the *bzn* or *addon* folders. If a file with the given name does not yet exist, a new one will be created **but not yet saved**.

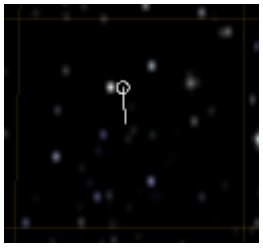
When you confirm your changes with the *OK* button and double-click on the shortcut Armada will launch into edit mode.

Edit Mode

Edit Mode looks very much like the normal Armada game interface, but there are also very important differences to it.

While in Edit Mode you can lay down objects, ships, and stations by hitting the appropriate function key to navigate the build lists. Here is an overview of how to do that.

- Use your F-keys (e.g. F1) to open sub menus (shown in the upper right corner of the screen) or place map objects.
- Use the TAB key to go back up a level in the menu.
- When hovering your mouse pointer over a selected object left-click and hold to drag the unit or point to the desired location.
- When hovering your mouse pointer over a selected object hold down CTRL and move the mouse to adjust the height of the object.
- When hovering your mouse pointer over a selected object hold down the right mouse button and drag to rotate the object.
- When hovering your mouse pointer over a selected object hit DEL to remove this object.
- Double click on an element to modify its *Object Settings*.
- Double right click on a unit to modify its *Physics Parameters*.
- Hold down SHIFT and use the ↑ and ↓ arrows to change the team number for units and buildings that will be placed next. (You can also change the Team by double clicking the object and changing the value afterwards.)
- Use CTRL + R to specify the map name, background, map size, ambient light, etc. (Note: some of the settings in this menu are overridden by the game setup screen as they were used while designing single player missions.)
- Use CTRL + S to save the map in the directory *addon*. (All new maps will be placed in the directory *addon* by default.)
- Hold ALT and left click to drop a point.



- Hold ALT and double click to drop a point and open it's properties in one go.
- Continue to left click to add more points to the path, that will be formed by multiple points.

- Right click to stop adding more points to the current path.

Setting Map Properties

When using CTRL + R, you can set a number of properties of the currently edited map. Without a proper script of rule file only Mission Title, Map Size and Background Images are useful. Those are non-campaign maps. If you have a rule file and a script file, then you are able to create new missions.

Be aware: Changing the map size is not done immediately. It will only take effect after saving and loading the map anew (restart map editor).

The Map Title is shown in the map selection menu. The left side of the hyphen shows the actual file name, the right side the title entered here.

Here is a list of backgrounds that come shipped with Armada by default:

File Name	Contents
mbg01.sod	All white

File Name	Contents
mbg02.sod	Blue nebula with scattered stars
mbgbaku.sod	The Bryar Patch
mbgblue.sod	Blue nebula
mbgborg.sod	Borg space (yellowish background)
mbgcard.sod	Cardassian space
mbgdom1.sod	Scattered purple nebula
mbgdom2.sod	Heavy stars with red nebula at bottom left
mbgearth.sod	Heavy stars with greenish nebula at bottom right
mbgglxy.sod	Heavy stars with blueish nebula at bottom right
mbgikol	Heavy Stars with greenish/redish nebula to the left
mbgklin2.sod	Heavy stars with orange nebula at top
mbgklin3.sod	Heavy stars with orange nebula at top left
mbgklin4.sod	Heavy stars with scattered orange nebula
mbgkling.sod	Klingon space
mbgomega.sod	Heavy stars with orange nebula
mbgrom1.sod	Heavy stars with green nebula at top right bottom left
mbgrom2.sod	Heavy stars with green nebula at bottom right
mbgrom3.sod	Heavy stars with green and red nebula at bottom right
mbgstars.sod	Default, heavy stars and space

Placing Player Starting Locations

Naming a point in a specific pattern can be used to define the players starting locations. Double click on an existing point (or ALT + double click to create a new one) and name it `Camera_1`. This sets the starting position for the first player. Continue this step for subsequent players starting positions by incrementing the number, e.g. `Camera_2` etc. The number of Cameras that are appropriately named will determine the number of players which can play on a given map. Do not leave any gaps (e.g. *Camera_1* to *Camera_3* and then *Camera_5*, leaving out *4*) and do not add points with the same name twice (e.g. two times *Camera_1*). When placing two of the same name, only the first one created will take effect.

Setting Teams of Map Objects

If you intend on creating custom scenarios with pre-defined units (used with selection *Map Units* for setting *Starting Units*) you can set the team of an object to numbers `0` to 8. Team 0 is the neutral faction in Grey. Teams 1-8 are player teams. Do not set this to anything higher than 8. **It will crash the map editor instantly.** Setting this value kind of marks who the object belongs to. If you play with map units, then this will be the starting units of a player, nothing else is given. If you play with any other setting, these units will vanish.

The *Perceived Team* on the other hand sets which team this unit will not behave hostile to. The player cannot necessarily control this unit (other team) but it will behave as if it were an ally. If the perceived team is not present during game play (e.g. 2 players on map but perceived team = 3) then this object will be hostile to anyone, unless its perceived team is 0.

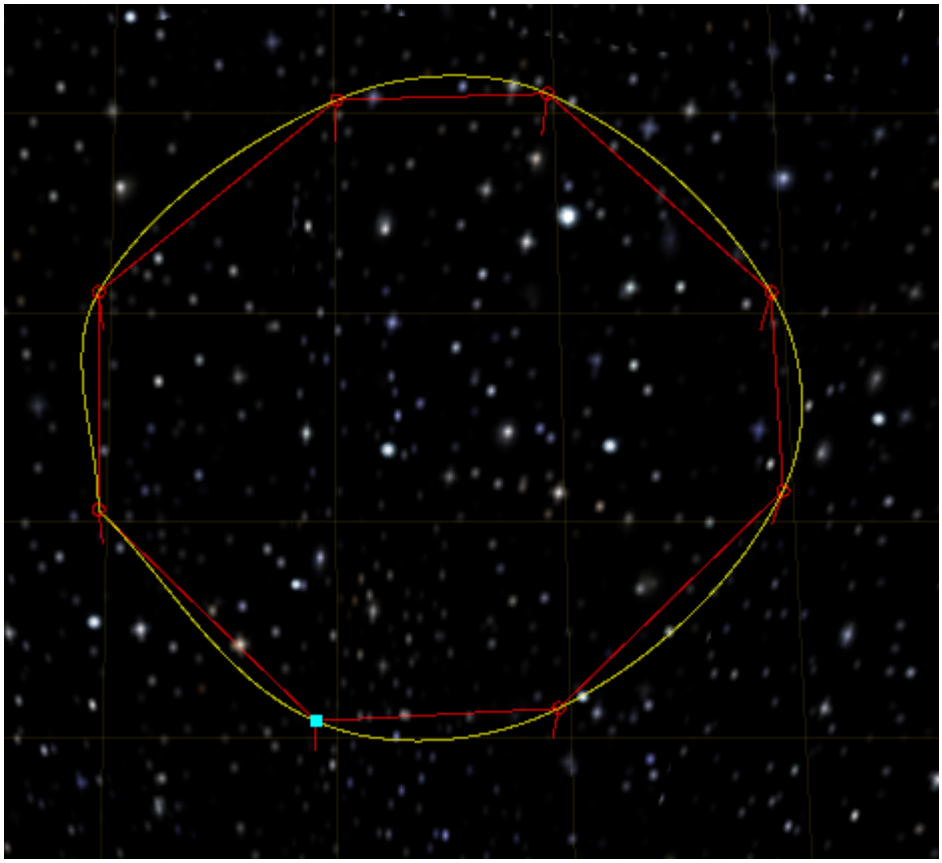
Teams can be set for inert objects as well, e.g. Temporal Gates. When setting a pair of *Temporal Gates* on a normal map (not to be used with map units), make sure to set their team to `0`. Otherwise when starting a match with that map, they will simply vanish.

When placing a derelict ship (crew = `0`) setting the team makes a big difference. Units and stations of team 0 cannot be taken over. They always behave neutral. So when beaming over, the crew will be restored to the beamed over amount but you will still not be able to control this unit or station. It will still belong to team 0. So when trying to add derelict ships that are supposed to be taken over, use teams 1 to 8 for that.

How to Make Moving Asteroid Belts

By default placed Asteroid Fields are immobile. But Armada also features moving Asteroid Belts. They are, however a bit more tricky to create.

1. ALT + double click your first point. Set it to Asteroid Belt and set the speed. The name can be chosen freely. **From this step on make sure to not accidentally right-click.** This would end the setting of a path. If you do this too early, it will end with a still immobile asteroid field but with a new path that does nothing.
2. Left click to create whatever path you want.
3. If you want to do a full (closed) circle, ALT + click on the first point of the path set. This is not necessary but possible.
4. You should now end up with a new path, that has the colors red and yellow:



1. If not, make sure to follow the above three steps exactly. If so, you can now begin placing Asteroid Fields in the vicinity of your new path. They do not have to be placed in any particular position in relation to the path. Just place them somewhere rather near to it.

2. As a last step, right click to end the creation of the moving Asteroid belt.

That's it. The motion will **not** be depicted in the Map Editor. Only during actual game play will you be able to see such Asteroid belts moving. Experiment with the speed, to see which speed suits your map design best. The Asteroid Fields will move in the same direction in which you placed the path points. So from first point traversing the intermediate points to the last point set. The object movement will not apply for other elements, such as nebulae or moons. Only asteroid fields will be affected by this technique.

Important Notes

1. When accessing a new portion of the build menu the editor may pause for a moment while it loads the textures for the relevant objects.
2. Remember not to over saturate your maps with objects. The more objects the slower the game will go. This is especially true of Nebulae. Use them sparingly and avoid stacking Nebulae of the same type as one Nebula is just as effective strategically as several stacked on each other.
3. If you use too many Wormholes, Temporal Gates or Black Holes, they might begin to optically vanish. They are still there, having their effects but the game's engine fails to render them properly.
4. The effects of different Nebula types **do** stack, so it is important to remember that. For example if you stack a nebula which drops shields with one that damages ships you are likely to blow up anything which enters it.
5. Do not adjust the height of stations as this causes serious issues with pathing.
6. To avoid getting the viewable trapezoid on your minimap when you save, scroll to the top right corner of the screen and zoom all the way in before saving. It reduces the trapezoid to one dot which is usually not recognizable or visible.
7. When creating a new map, set the race to Borg, at least until you are finished with saving the map for getting a preview bmp. The Borg interface shows the greatest area of the strategic map, with no corners being cut.
8. When saving a map with a wide-screen resolution, you might end up with map previews, that are the wrong aspect ratio and size (game crashes when trying to select the map or view its preview). This mostly happens when saving with very high resolutions. So you may have to correct that yourself. When resizing the preview with a graphics editor, you may notice that map objects are not depicted very recognizable any more. So when saving a map, better use lower resolutions while you do it and use 16 bits (e.g. 640x480x16 should do just fine). If you are forced to fix it afterwards, keep the following rules in mind:
    - The bmp file **must** be 128×128 pixels
    - It must **not** have a color space embedded.
    - It **must** have 24 bits per pixel (**not** 32).
9. When placing Wormholes or Temporal Gates remember to always place two of them as they work in pairs. Example: The first wormhole laid down is connected to the second wormhole laid down. If you create a sole Wormhole, a unit entering it will crash the game.
10. The height of Wormholes, Dilithium Moons and Black Holes is set automatically by the game so there is no point in adjusting their height.
11. When adding stations for scenario maps (using map units as starting units), placing stations is OK for human players. But the AI will not use them unless there are definitions (rules, scripts) that make them do something. So on a normal multiplayer map the AI will not use pre-placed stations for construction of anything. (It will, however use yards for repairing ships.)
12. You can adjust the map lighting by laying down a light, then double clicking on it and using the

color option to set its intensity and color. You can then rotate and position the light as desired. The exact location of a light is not important. The direction it faces is global. You can use more than one, if you want to illuminate the map objects from different angles at once.
13. If you want to place map objects or points/paths in a straight line, you might want to turn the map to a proper angle and use your cursor keys, while keeping the mouse completely still. Using the F-keys will place new objects along a straight line.
14. Keep enough distance between Dilithium Moons and barriers (map border, asteroid fields). Otherwise freighters mining them might get stuck.
15. When placing moons, consider where the corresponding mining station will have to be. If there is not enough room to place the station near the moon it might get frustrating for the player (especially if different starting locations are more or less advantages regarding this aspect).
16. Try and make maps AI friendly. The AI tends to take the nearest two moons early on in the game. So when one or two of the moons are in an opponents base, things get messy.
17. Keep enough distance between moons to make freighters automatically use the proper station to deliver their cargo. When moons are two close to one another, the mining stations might also be too close to one another. That may lead to the problem, that freighters are not delivering their cargo to the mining station they are supposed to use, when the nearest one is the same for at least two moons. In essence your freighters might prefer one mining station over the other, causing them all to go to the same station, although there are two available.

See Also

- Stock Maps

[**Modding**] [Tools]
