

Contract Hunters Instruction Booklet - Windows

Player's guide for the Windows edition.

1. Welcome to Contract Hunters

- Welcome, Hunter. The frontier is fractured, dangerous, and full of fortified sites, buried complexes, and hostile encounters.
- In Contract Hunters, your job is to enter the field, survive the resistance, secure what matters, and bring the operation to a successful close.
- As a Contract Hunter, you take assignments that ordinary forces cannot-or will not-handle. What begins as another dangerous contract leads deeper into the mystery of five sealed alien artifacts and the technology known as the Fracture Key.
- Whether you play alone or with a full local squad, every mission rewards careful movement, steady nerves, and good resource management.

Illustration: Contract Hunters title screen.



2. Quick Reference

- Movement: use your assigned Forward, Backward, Turn Left, and Turn Right controls to advance through the mission area.
- Action: use the action control to confirm menus, open doors, activate switches, and interact with mission objects.
- Pause: press F12 to open the Pause Menu.
- Tab Reference: WPN = Weapons, AMO = Ammunition, ITM = Items, EQP = Equipment, STS = Status, CMD = Commands.

- HUD Access: double-tap the action control to open or close the highlighted HUD tab.

3. Getting Started

- From the Main Menu, choose Local Play to play on one machine or Network Play to sign in and enter the online flow.
- Local Play leads to New Game or Load Game. New Game begins a fresh run, while Load Game opens the save list and restores an earlier session.
- When starting a new local game on Windows, the setup flow continues through game mode, player setup, and mission selection.
- Game Mode offers Campaign and Short Game.
- Campaign uses the backstory screen and then the world map. Short Game loads directly into the demo level without visiting the world map first.
- Windows local play supports one to four players. During setup, players are assigned to available viewports and then choose their characters before deployment.

Illustration: Main Menu.



Illustration: Local Play menu.



Illustration: Game mode selection.



Illustration: Player selection.



Illustration: World map.



4. Controls

- Player 1 uses W, A, S, D for forward, turn left, backward, and turn right. Space is the main action key.
- Player 2 uses the Arrow keys for movement and turning. NumPad 0 is the action key.
- Player 3 uses I, J, K, L for movement and turning. M is the action key.
- Player 4 uses T, F, G, H for movement and turning. Enter is the action key.
- The action key is used to confirm menu choices, open doors, activate switches, and interact with world objects.

- Shared system controls are also important: Esc or Alt+Enter toggles fullscreen, F1 toggles multiview, F2 toggles the HUD, F3 toggles the debug overlay, F4 cycles hi-res mode, F12 opens the Pause Menu, and O toggles the floor style.
- Xbox controller support is built in. Each Xbox controller represents one player, the Left Stick or D-Pad handles forward, backward, and turning, A performs the main action, and LB or RB cycles the HUD tabs.

Illustration: Windows gameplay view and HUD.



5. Understanding the HUD

- The main view shows the world ahead, while the HUD keeps combat, navigation, and inventory status visible across the top of the screen.
- The health monitor shows current condition for the active hunter. Weapon information shows the equipped weapon or held item, and ranged weapons also display current rounds, magazine size, and reserve ammunition.
- A compass is always present to help with orientation, and the equipment panel shows what is currently worn or equipped.
- The category rotator provides quick access to six HUD pages: WPN for weapons, AMO for ammunition, ITM for usable items, EQP for worn equipment, STS for character status, and CMD for command options.
- Double-tap the action control to open or close the currently highlighted HUD tab. Once open, Forward and Backward move through lists, and the action control performs the operation shown for that tab.
- The STS page displays the hunter profile, including name, species, role, Strength, Stamina, current health, and carry weight, along with the character's special ability.

- The CMD page contains command options such as auto-breaking duplicate weapon pickups into ammunition and blocking mismatched healing item use.

Illustration: HUD reference.



6. Playing Contract Hunters

- 1. Enter the mission. In Campaign play, deploy from the world map. In Short Game, the level loads directly once setup is complete.
- 2. Explore. Search rooms, corridors, and side spaces for supplies, equipment, and useful pickups.
- 3. Overcome obstacles. Use doors, panels, switches, access cards, and movable objects to open new routes and solve the layout ahead.
- 4. Fight carefully. The game rewards deliberate movement and controlled use of ammunition rather than reckless advance.
- 5. Watch your condition. Health, ammo, carry weight, and active item effects all matter once a mission turns dangerous.
- 6. Complete the operation. Survive the objective, finish the route, and continue on to the next contract.
- Mission objectives vary by operation. Based on the campaign data, objectives can include reaching an extraction point, retrieving a keycard, operating switching controls, opening a containment vault, activating alien switches, or recovering an artifact.

7. Weapons and Equipment

- The HUD inventory system divides carried gear into separate categories so you can review your loadout quickly.
- Tab Reference: WPN = Weapons.

- Tab Reference: AMO = Ammunition.
- Tab Reference: ITM = Usable Items.
- Tab Reference: EQP = Worn Equipment.
- Tab Reference: STS = Hunter Status.
- Tab Reference: CMD = Commands.
- WPN lists your weapons, including damage, range, ammunition type, current magazine state, and reserve ammunition where applicable. The held weapon is marked on the list.
- AMO lists ammunition pickups, their ammo types, stack amounts, and weight.
- ITM lists non-weapon items such as healing items, gadgets, and access items. Healing entries show their recovery value, while timed gadgets can show READY or ACTIVE status with remaining seconds.
- EQP lists worn equipment and identifies the item slot it uses. Equipped pieces are marked as worn.
- Within WPN and EQP, Forward and Backward move the cursor and the action control equips the selected entry. In ITM, the action flow includes using the selected item. Several tabs also support dropping the current selection by holding the action control together with Backward.
- Treat weapons, healing, armor, and access items as part of the same survival economy. The right item at the right moment matters more than carrying everything blindly.

8. The Campaign

- The Campaign is presented through a world map of mission nodes. Unlocked nodes represent available operations and can be selected for deployment.
- Each mission tooltip shows a Threat Level on the world map. Use it as a quick warning about the relative danger of the operation before you deploy.
- The larger campaign objective is to recover five sealed alien artifacts tied to the Fracture Key. The known artifact items include the Helix Core Fragment, Organic Resonance Shard, Phase Distortion Lens, Echo Sync Key, and Prime Convergence Node.
- Artifact progression matters at the end of the campaign: the final artifact gate opens only after all five required artifacts have been placed on their designated pedestals.
- As missions are completed, campaign progress records the current level and the set of completed levels, allowing the route forward to expand over time.

9. Saving and Loading

- Press F12 during play to open the Pause Menu. From there you can Load Game, Go back to world map, Resume, or Exit Game.
- Save files record the current map, current level, completed levels, player positions, health, stats, inventory, active buffs, door states, and other shared mission state.
- The Load Game screen lists each save by date and time together with the number of players stored in that file.

- Keyboard players can move through the save list with Up and Down, confirm with Enter or Space, delete with Delete, and go back with Esc. Controller users can navigate with the D-Pad, load with A, delete with X, and back out with B.
- Warning: deleted save files are removed from disk and cannot be recovered through the game.
- Use multiple saves when a difficult branch, low-ammo situation, or risky objective is ahead.

Illustration: Pause Menu.



Illustration: Load Game screen.



10. Network Play

- Network Play begins with the login screen, where you can enter a username and password to log in or register a new account.
- After login, the Network menu offers New Game, Resume Game, Friends, Notifications, and Logout.
- Online sessions support up to four players. The host creates the session, chooses the game mode, selects a player count from 2, 3, or 4 players, invites friends, and creates the game on the server.
- Other players join the host's session through invitations, notifications, or the network lobby flow.
- Friends and invitations are part of the normal flow. The friends screen supports adding and removing friends and accepting or declining incoming friend requests. Notifications and invite prompts can be used to accept pending invitations.
- Before a new or resumed session begins, the waiting and lobby flow is used to gather players. A host can only start once the required players are present and all of them are marked ready.
- Character selection is synchronized online so the same character cannot be chosen twice. If a player disconnects or the server connection is lost, the session reports the disconnect and returns control to the UI flow.
- Network pause and save requests are also synchronized, so a remote player can ask the host session to perform a save.
- Where campaign ownership gating is in use, the in-game campaign purchase messaging states that only the host needs to own the Campaign for cooperative network play.

Illustration: Network login.



Illustration: Network menu.



Illustration: Friends screen.



Illustration: Network lobby.



11. Settings

- The Settings screen on Windows currently focuses on input reference rather than broad gameplay configuration.
- The Keyboard page shows the four player keyboard layouts and the shared system keys used for fullscreen, HUD, debug overlay, pause, and other display functions.
- The Xbox Controller page shows the controller diagram and the built-in bindings for movement, action, and HUD tab cycling.
- Use the Left and Right arrow keys or click the tabs to switch between the Keyboard and Xbox Controller pages.

Illustration: Settings screen.



12. Tips and Tactics

- Move carefully and clear spaces methodically. Many bad fights begin with one careless turn into an unseen threat.
- Watch ammunition before opening the next door. The HUD gives you both current rounds and reserve ammunition for a reason.
- Use the inventory tabs often. A healing item, gadget, or piece of equipment is most useful before the situation becomes desperate.
- Keep an eye on carry weight in the STS page so your loadout stays deliberate rather than chaotic.

13. Troubleshooting

- I can't log in: verify the server details in network.json, make sure the game server is running, and then try your username and password again.
- I can't join my friend's game: confirm that the host session is still active and that the invitation or notification is still available before trying again.
- My online session stopped unexpectedly: if a player disconnects or the server connection is lost, return to the network flow and reconnect before starting another session.
- My save isn't loading: reopen the Pause Menu or Load Game screen and confirm that the correct save file is selected.
- The display doesn't look right: use the built-in fullscreen, multiview, HUD, debug, and hi-res toggles documented in the controls and settings pages.

14. Credits and Legal

- Contract Hunters is provided by Epotec systemutveckling AB, Sweden.

- Manual Edition: Windows.
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