

# STEEL RANGER

**A Psytronik Software release in 2018  
Developed by Covert Bitops**

**Commodore 64/128 + disk drive**

## **LOADING**

C128 must be in C64 mode. Insert disk into drive with label up and type:

LOAD"\*",8,1

Replace 8 with your device number if necessary. The game should start automatically. If this does not work due to e.g. OS configuration, type instead:

LOAD"STEEL RANGER",8  
RUN

The inbuilt fastloader supports 1541, 1571, 1581, CMD FD / HD and IDE64 devices. For other devices, a non-fastloader fallback is used.

If the game does not load, hold down SPACE or FIRE after the load command until the screen turns blue, to enable manual non-fastloader operation. For the best experience, it is recommended to play Steel Ranger from a fastloader supported device.

Due to utilizing disk space to maximum, the game cannot be filecopied to another 5 ¼ inch floppy. To make a backup, either sector copy the disk side, or copy all the files to a larger media, like a 3 ½ inch floppy or hard disk.

The game will benefit from the C128's 2MHz mode and the SuperCPU's turbo mode to eliminate potential slowdown.

## **SCENARIO**

Year 2218. As humanity is forced to expand beyond Earth, they come into contact with a hostile machine intelligence born from their own creations, and find themselves stranded in a desperate war against its vast offensive fleet.

In the hope of gaining valuable intelligence, the United Military patrol ship "Scourge" is cleared to investigate a mystery signal originating from a barren planet – ones and zeroes forming an Omega symbol.

Aboard the ship are soldiers equipped with “Ranger” self-recharging armor suits, designed for combat against overwhelming enemies in any environment:

Archer	The ship's commander
Kara	Cyberwarfare specialist, second in command
Leo	Weapons specialist
Diane	Medic
Jay	Pilot

You are the newest addition to the crew. Good luck!

## ***CONTROLS***

Plug the joystick into port 2. Use UP / DOWN / FIRE to navigate the title screen menus. Press FIRE to proceed at each text screen or dialogue line.

## ***OPTIONS MENU***

The options menu allows to choose difficulty from one of four possible (CASUAL being the easiest.) Difficulty affects damage from enemy attacks, armor power recharge speed, and the amount of ammunition dropped by enemies.

You can also switch sound effects and in-game music on / off, and set whether double-clicking FIRE can be used to select weapons or enter the pause menu.

## ***CHARACTER CUSTOMIZATION***

When starting a new game, you can customize your character. Use joystick LEFT / RIGHT to select letters of the character name and cycle through appearance and armor color options. The name can also be typed in by keyboard, and may not be empty.

## ***RANGER SUIT OPERATION***

Ranger suit joystick controls:

LEFT	Turn / move left
RIGHT	Turn / move right
UP	Jump / Climb up / Grab ladder / Interact
DOWN	Crouch / Climb down / Pick up item
FIRE	Fire the Ranger rifle

The rifle can be aimed into eight directions by holding the direction along with FIRE. If your character was moving when FIRE is pressed, movement will continue. Firing down while crouching is not possible – you can either fire diagonally down instead, or stand up first.

The Ranger rifle can fire using eight different weapon systems. Activating each weapon besides the first (Full Auto) requires picking up its ammunition first. The Full Auto weapon can fire at a reduced rate even after its ammunition runs out.

Weapon selection keyboard controls:

SPACE	Next weapon
, .	Scroll through weapons left / right
1 – 8	Select weapon directly

To select weapon with the joystick, double-click FIRE quickly, hold after the second press and press LEFT / RIGHT to scroll through weapons.

During your adventure you can install additional systems into the suit. Instructions on using them will be provided during the installation sequence.

### ***PAUSE MENU***

Press the RUN/STOP key to pause the game and bring up the map screen, which shows the world around you that you have explored so far, and your current position represented as a flashing X. The top of the screen shows your character's name, the name of the current location, and the elapsed time.

Use joystick LEFT / RIGHT / FIRE to select pause menu options:

BACK	Return to game.
STATUS	Show weapons and suit systems. FIRE returns.
PAN	Shift the map view by pushing the joystick into the wanted direction. FIRE returns.
SAVE & END	Return to the title screen to save the game into one of four available slots.

The pause screen can also be entered with the joystick by double-clicking FIRE quickly, then holding it for two seconds after the second press.

Saves are made on entering each area / room. Take this into account to not lose progress; any enemies in the area have to be fought again when continuing from the save. If you are in a dangerous situation where being able to continue is not guaranteed, the save remains at the last safe point instead.

### ***STATUS DISPLAY***



The bottom of the screen contains the status display. From left to right, it shows available weapons (arrows indicate selected weapon), collected parts, and your score.

Below each weapon is its ammunition gauge. Below the parts display is a recharging fuel gauge, which becomes active once movement-assisting suit systems are installed.

Below the score is the armor power meter. This depletes as you take damage, but recharges automatically over time or when collecting power-up (P) cells. Emergency recharge at low power is fastest.

Taking damage with no armor power left is fatal, at which point the Ranger suit self-destructs, and a menu similar to the pause menu is shown, in which you can choose:

CONTINUE      Retry from the beginning of the last entered area.

SAVE & END    Return to the title screen to save the game.

## ***INTERACTION***

Conversations with crew members happen automatically once you are close enough. They may also contact you through the suit's radio.

When you are at an environment object that can be interacted with, an arrow will flash at your feet. Press UP to interact. These objects include lift terminals, computer terminals and stations for power recharge / ammunition / systems upgrades. Using the stations requires parts collected from enemies.

When standing on a lift platform, press UP or DOWN while at the center to move. Lift terminals located next to the shaft will call the lift to your position. To pick up items or crouch while on a lift, either stand to the side or press down diagonally.

## ***CREDITS***

Design, code, graphics, music & sound FX:	Lasse Öörni
Packaging artwork:	Trevor Storey
Packaging:	Jason Mackenzie
Additional loader & compressor code:	Per Olofsson Wolfram Sang Christoph Thelen Magnus Lind
Testing:	Marja Kuipers Martin Köngäs Jason Mackenzie Linus Quernhorst Simon Quernhorst Mikael Tillander
Promo trailer:	Johannes Kuipers Marja Kuipers