

Welcome once again Commander.

I, am Commander Lister. Today we are going to: Map Making Boot Camp.

First of all, do you have Annihilator?? Well?? I use V1.5, you may want V1.6 but it makes no difference to me. My tilesets don't like V1.6 so if when, starting to make your map, and all there is black squares, delete V1.6 and use V1.5

I would recommend you use V1.5

TAMEC, also stocks an infinite amount of tile sets for your downloading pleasure. Visit TAMEC to get new tilesets for TA.

TAMEC has all the original TA tilesets completed, the ones from TAE are not entirely complete, also hundreds of tilesets made by masters such as [Wizard-Kane](#) and [C_A_P](#).

This tutorial will guide you through 8 easy to follow steps to making your own map for Total Annihilation in Annihilator.

This tutorial is simple, easy to follow, and if followed correctly will produce a great (and hard) little 2 player map.

Unlike the last Map Boot Camp, (the TAE Tutorial for making maps, also by me), this time we will be using another program, Codename: "Annihilator" (by Kinboat (see credits)).

OK, to understand what I am going to be talking about, I would advise that you take the TAE Map Tutorial FIRST,

But it is not necessary.

TAE (Total Annihilation Map & Mission Editor) can be found on the Total Annihilation: Core Contingency CD, under the folder 'TAE'.

(A NOTE: This tutorial will be practically identical to my TAE tutorial but is designed to teach you the more simple way of map making (and more widely used), using Annihilator. Annihilator is much simpler than TAE and doesn't take as long to load up. However, when browsing through the tileset menus, it has to load every menu (you'll find out)).

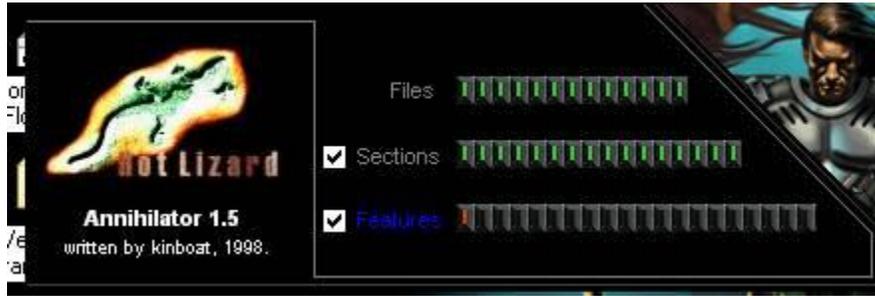
OK, let's go young Commander.

Step 1- The Beginning

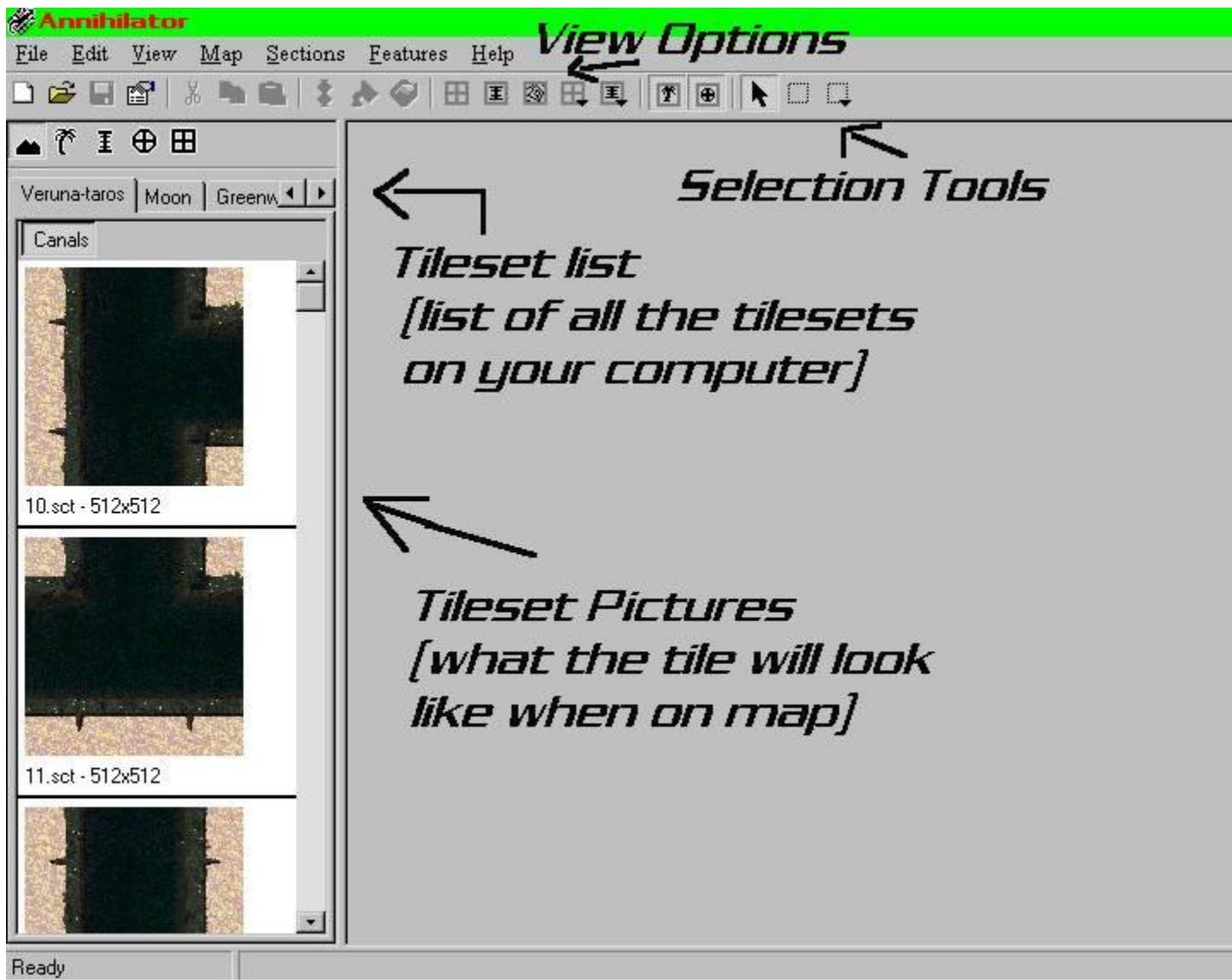
OK, let's get this show on the road!

Start, by loading up Annihilator: Start > Programs > Annihilator (default)

You should see the load up screen:



Once this is loaded, you will be in the main screen of Annihilator, Here is a quick explanation of a few things. Anything else we use I will explain on the way:

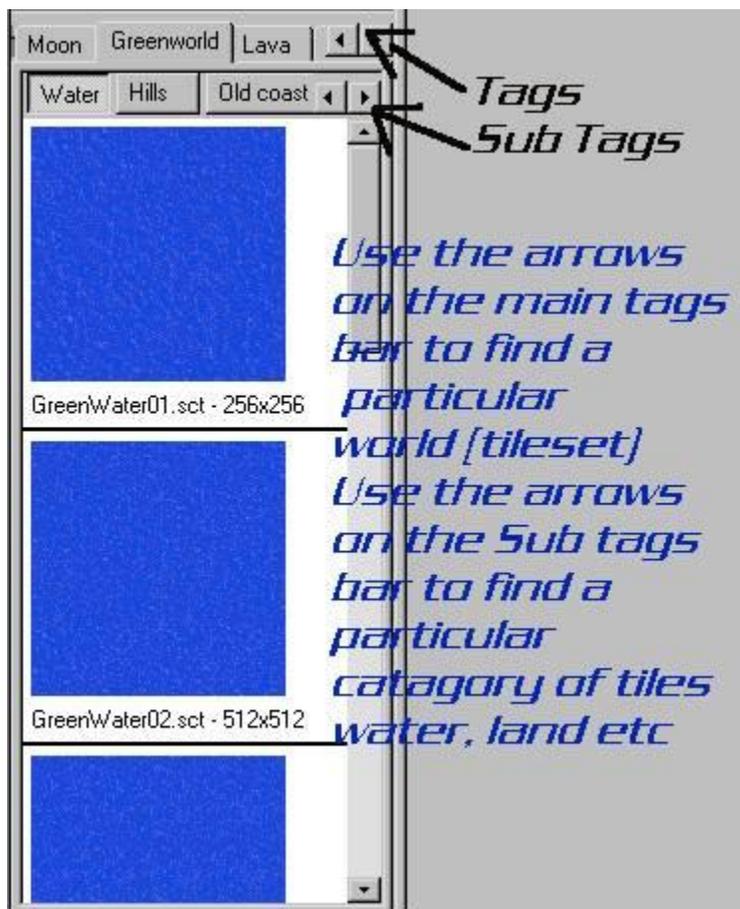


OK, now that we are loaded up, let's go on to:

Step 2- The World For Me

Now, your decision on what you do next is vital. **REMEMBER, YOU CAN NOT MIX TILESETS**, unless you have special mixed tilesets made by the master of all 3rd party TA things, C_A_P (see credits). But we aren't going to use mixed tilesets today. We are going to use the 'Greenworld' Tileset.

Look along your Tileset list for the tag that says 'Greenworld'. (You will have it)



OK, do you have the 'Greenworld' tag selected? Your view should be like the picture above. OK, now we start:

Step 3- The Base Of The Map

OK, now that we have the world we want to build with, we need a map to put it on! Click this



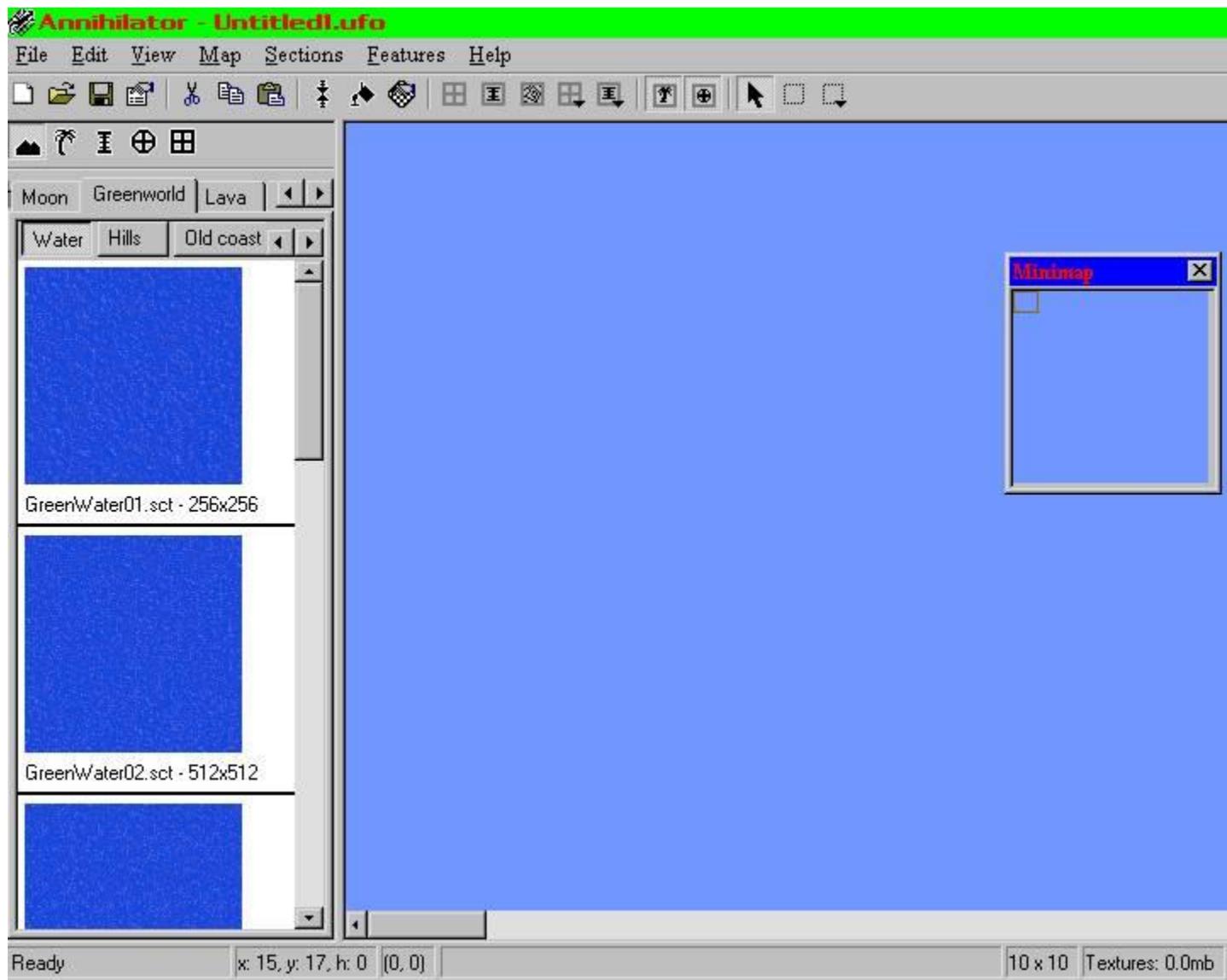
button: Or go 'File - New Map'.

Now we are confronted with this:

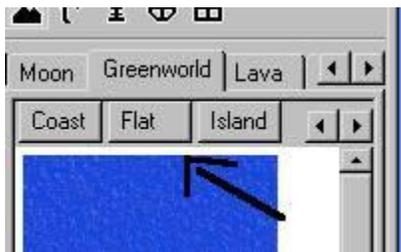


Fill into your boxes what is in here. 150x150. The box that says "Size 10x10" is how big the map is. Don't worry about the Bitmap tag. I'm not sure what the 'units' of measurement these are in but you get a feel for how big a map is by looking at the 'size' box,

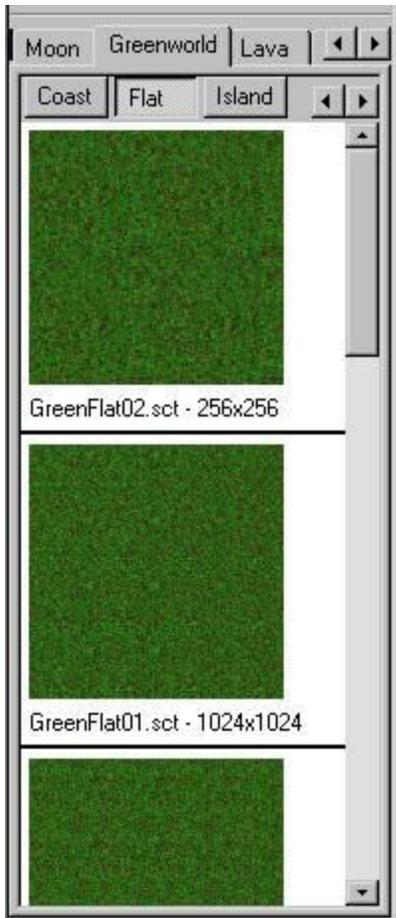
Now press OK and Annihilator will start making the empty map. Your screen should look like this:



OK, now it's time to put down some tiles, first we want the map to have a base ground, something we can build off. So, in the 'Greenworld' Subtags find the tag called 'Flat':



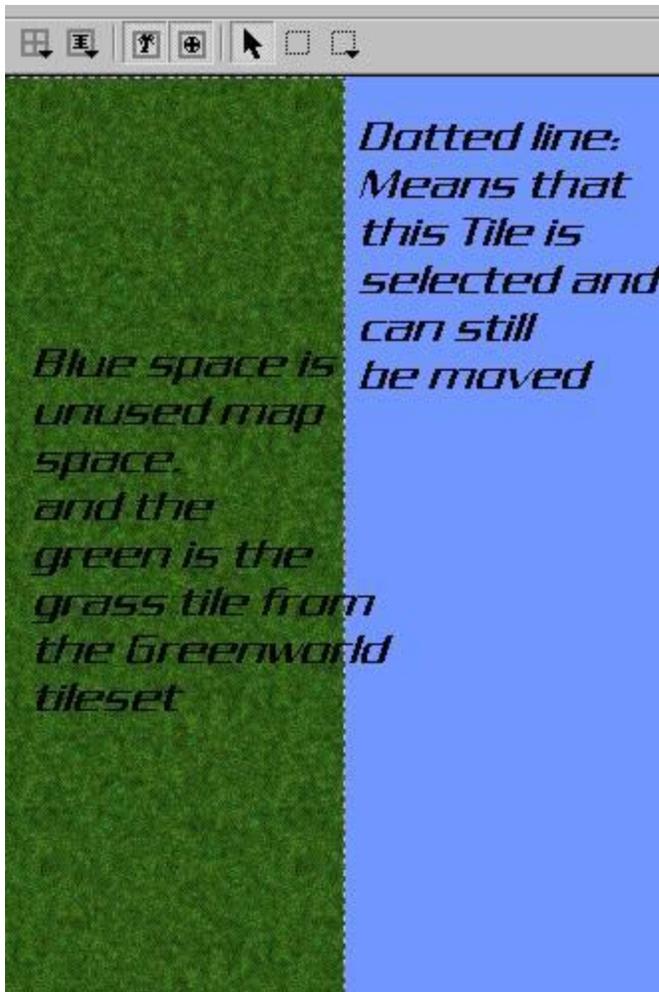
Click on it and your tile pictures menu will change to:



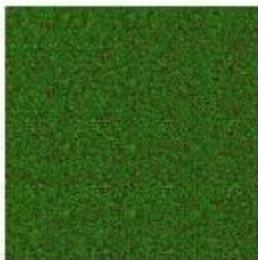
Now, **READ THIS CAREFULLY!**

Once a tile has been placed and **DESELECTED**, It cannot be Re-selected. You can select it using the selection tools (click and drag) to move pieces etc. And there is **NO**, repeat **NO** undo function for Annihilator or TAE, so be careful when placing tiles. Check that they aren't overlapping another tile, like half a hill etc.

OK, here are some hints:



OK, we want to cover the map with the grass tile. You can do this the easy way or the hard way. I like the easy way. In the Tile Picture menu, find the tile that is identical to this one:

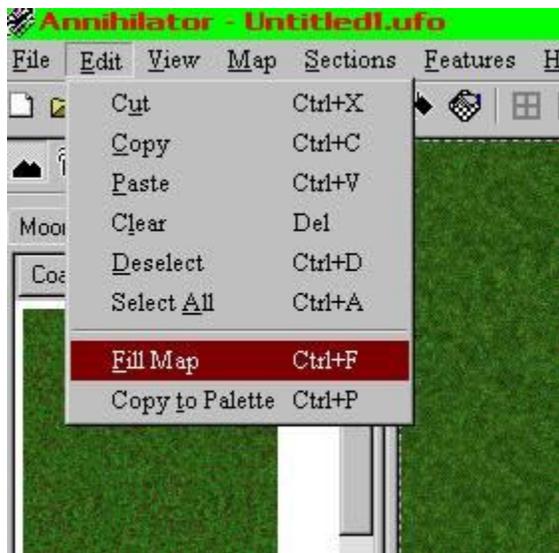


GreenFlat01.sct - 1024x1024

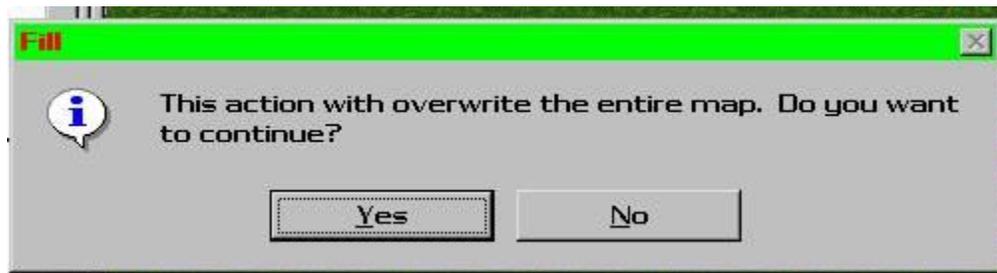
(Note: The numbers on the right of this picture tell you the size of the tile, this is the biggest, the smallest is 256x256 etc.)

To place a tile, either double click on the desired tile, or click once, position the outline and click again.

For now I want you to double click on the tile above, and just leave it. To cover the map quickly, make sure the tile is still selected (dotted line around edges) and go to the 'Edit' menu, and go to the 'Fill map' button.



You will be asked:



Click yes. This will cover the whole map with the tile you have selected at the time.

Now I want you to render the 'Radar Minimap'. Go: 'Map - Refresh Final Minimap'



Your minimap should now look exactly like this:



Now, VERY important, SAVE YOUR WORK!!!!!!! Go to "File - Save map" It will say that you have an unpasted section...etc, just click yes. (To get rid of this, unselect the tile by clicking somewhere off the tile.)

I would suggest saving it to something like c:\my documents
Call the File "Tutorial"

* If you have trouble saving your map, and you get an error message (my tester experienced this) it may be because you have a corrupt version of Annihilator, you are low on memory, or you are running Win XP. I'm not the Annihilator troubleshooter expert but I THINK that Annihilator does not like Win XP or Visa-Versa.*

Now, is it saved? Good work!

Step 4- Mountains And Mole Hills

Now it is time to add some solid obstacles to the map, called hills.....DER!

Hills can be an enemy or an advantage depending on how you place them on your map. Find and click on the "Hills" sub tag.



The 'Greenworld' has ALOT of small hills so I'm going to choose 8 hills for the map, and I want you to use the same ones. Once again the numbers below the pictures tell you how big the tile is.

The hills we are going to use are:

Green14.sct

Green25.sct

Green35.sct

Green39.sct

Green40.sct

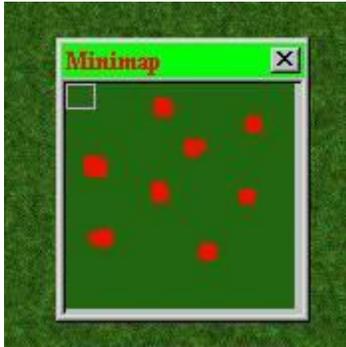
Green55.sct

Green62.sct

Green63.sct

Now for some reason, the tiles ARE NOT in order and are repeated twice...I DON'T KNOW!?!?
So when we use a particular hill you may have to look around for it.

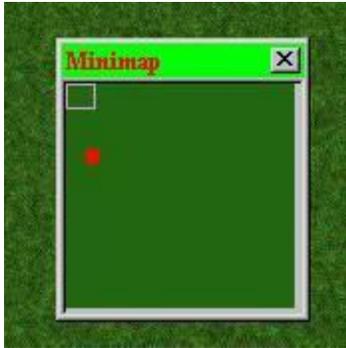
Now, let's look at our minimap again, the RED DOTS represent where I am roughly going to put the hills.



To put in hills, do it EXACTLY like a base tile....just don't do the fill map part!!!
Double click on the first tile, Green14.set, it now appears on your map like so:



To move it, LEFT click and HOLD while dragging it where you want it.
I want you to put the first hill here on the minimap:



....AND REMEMBER THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT!!! The best maps are NOT perfect!!

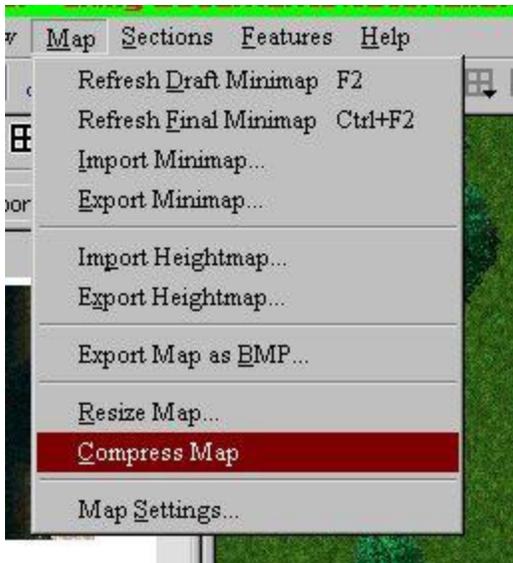
Now, using the remaining 7 hills, put them in on the map in this order:



Now, I will teach you a crucial thing about map making....size of the finished file.

A LOT of people don't like wasting HOURS downloading a map. So to save space, we use a thing called 'Compress Map'.

It's in 'Map - Compress Map'.



Once you have clicked Compress Map, Annihilator will take away all the tile pieces that you can't see (like the tile pieces under the hills you just placed) this saves room.

Now you can render your Minimap again and see what your map is looking like now with its hills in place:



REMEMBER IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT LIKE MINE!!!!

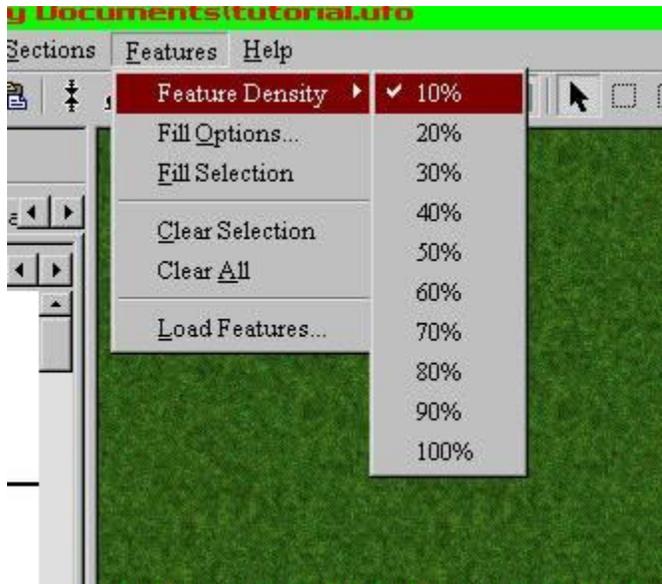
OK NOW SAVE YOUR WORK!!!!!!

Saved it yet?? Good! Let's go on to:

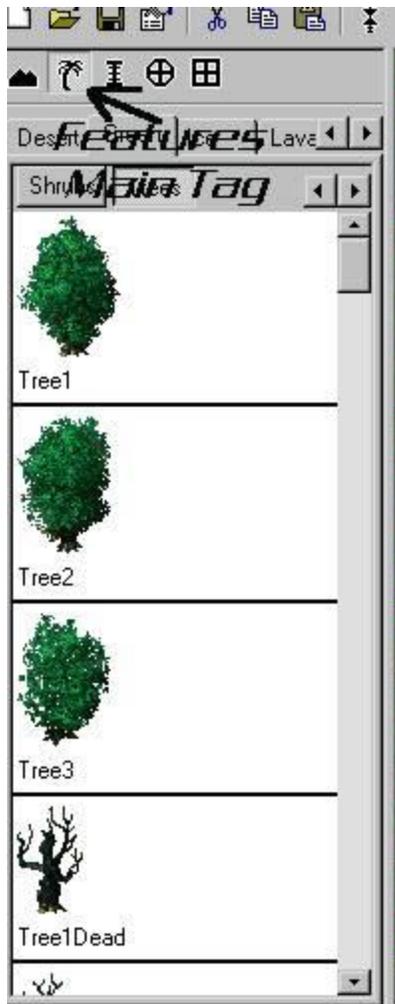
Step 5- Trees And Rocks

Here we encounter one of the few downfalls of Annihilator. Unlike TAE where you could just fill that map with trees and stuff with a few clicks. With Annihilator, you have to select the area you want to fill. This however can also be quite useful.

We are now going to Select the WHOLE map and cover it with 1 type of tree.
But first we have to tell Annihilator how dense we want the trees. Go to the menu Features -
Feature Density - and click 10%



Now click on the features button..... Can't see it?? Here it is!



Now, in the main tag bar, find the tag with "Green" written on it....done? Now in the subtag bar find the tag with "Trees" on it.

We are going to be using: Tree 1.

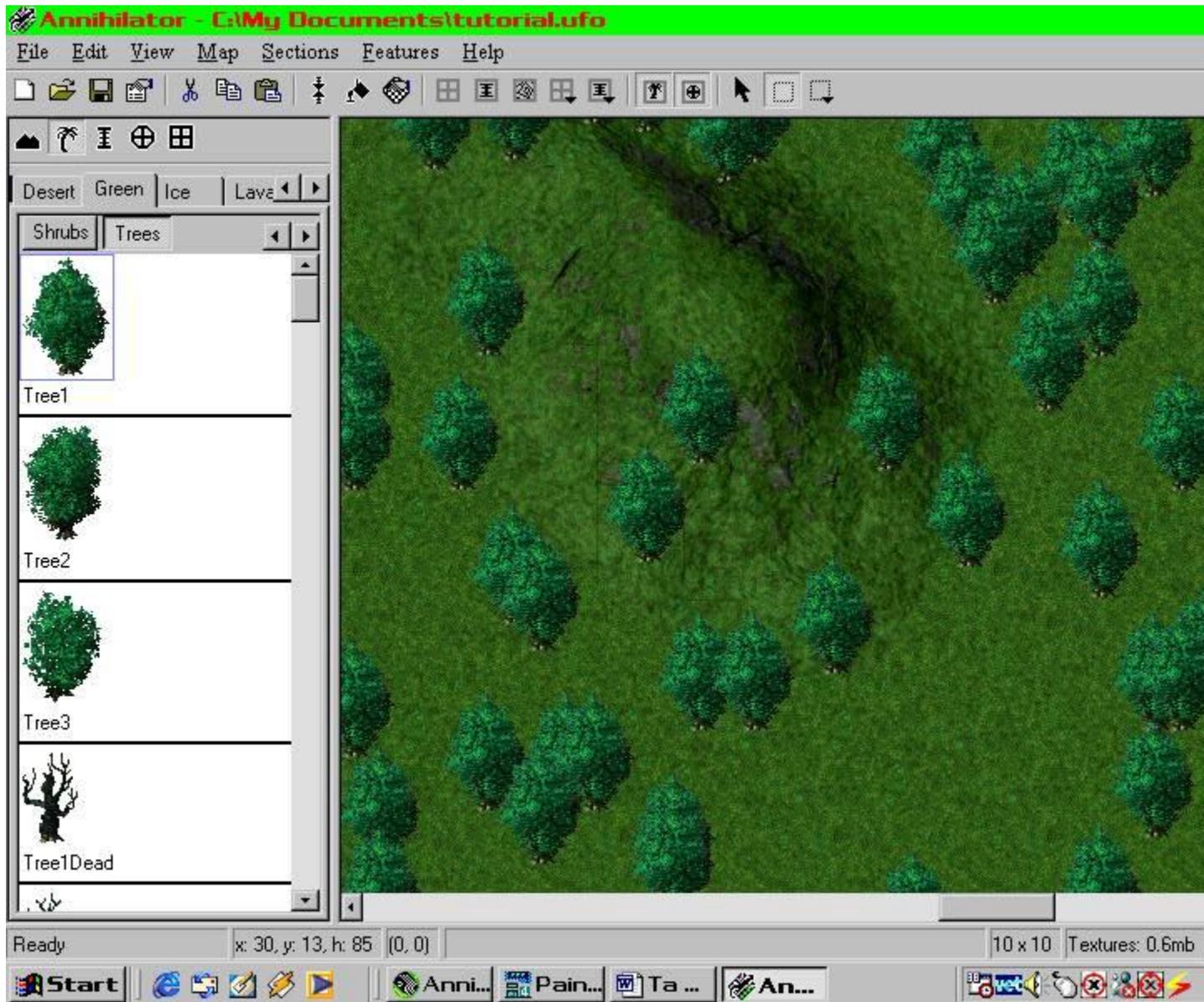
First we need to select the whole map, using the selection tool I pointed out earlier:



Now go to one corner of the map and click and drag until you get to the diagonally opposite side of the map.

Done? Good. Now on the selection tools, click back to the tool that is a cursor. Now, in the tileset picture window, click on Tree 1. Now click once in your selected area. You should have laid down one tree. Now go up to the Features menu and click 'Fill Selection'. Your map should now be covered with copies of Tree 1.

Now your map should look something like this:



Now, as for rocks, we won't worry about them for today, but to do rocks, just do it like trees, click and place one at a time.

NOW SAVE YOUR WORK!!!!!!!!!!

Step 6- Resources For An Army

OK, now I'm sure you all know HOW to play Total Annihilation, ya build metal extractors and solar collectors which is the resources you need to build BMR's (Big Muthaf***ing Robots) to kill the enemy.

Now boys and girls, what do we build metal extractor on?? Metal deposits, correct! Now how does one place metal deposits so one can build metal extractor so one can make BMR's and kill the enemy????? Well if you knew that then why are you taking this tutorial?? Oh, well. I guess I'll just have to teach you then wont I?

OK, look at this radar screen and I will show you where we are going to place the 20 metal deposits, OK? Now this time I'm going to let YOU decide WHICH deposits you put where.



This pic is bigger so you can see where to roughly put the deposits.

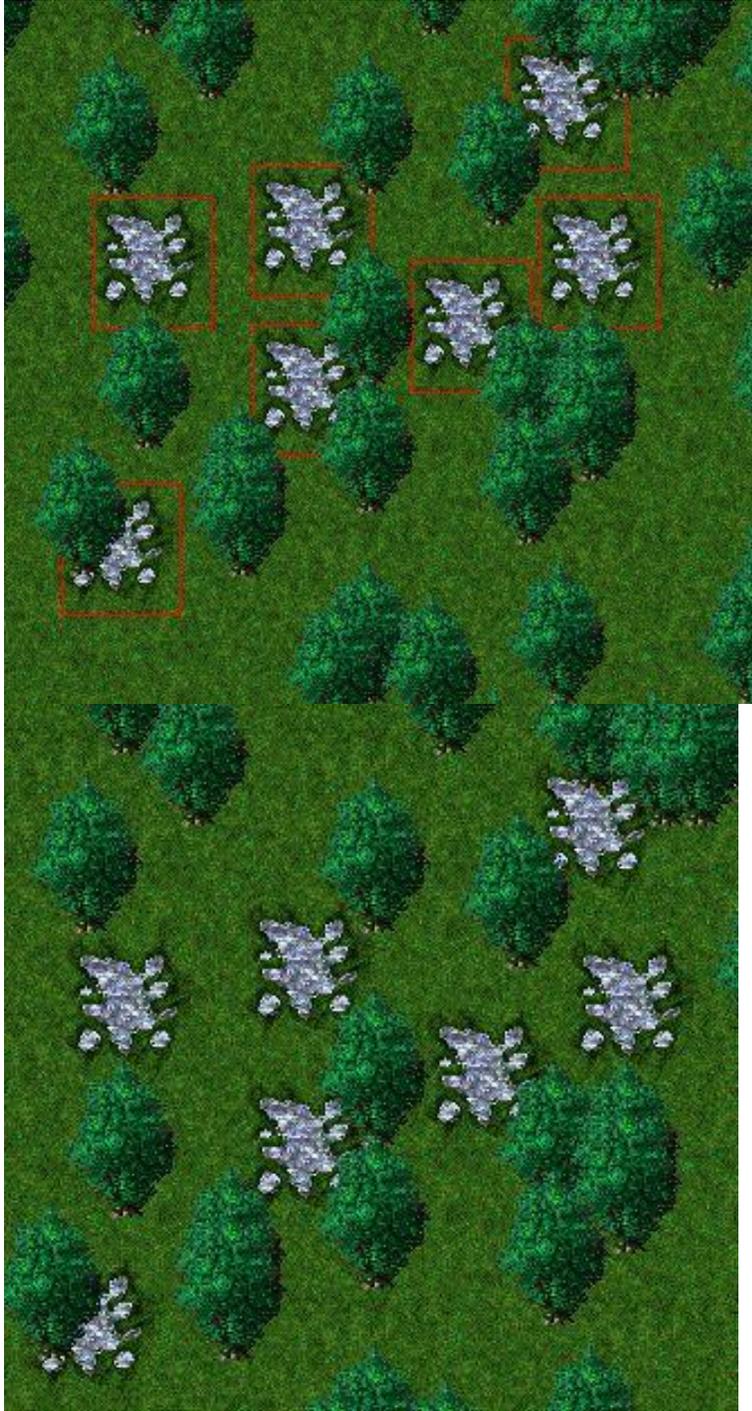
Now to get to our precious deposits, you have to go to the 'Rocks' sub tag. (Most feature tags will have a sub tag called 'Metal' but some are under different headings.)



The numbers next to the pics is me telling you how much metal you will get from each deposit. 1 is the least and 4 is the most.

To place metal do it just like the trees and rocks, click the piece you want to put down and then click on the map where you want to put it.

(CAUTION NOTE: When placing individual features on a map in Annihilator, they have a red box around them, if you don't like where you have put a feature and wish to delete it, and just press delete, you will delete all the features still selected (the red box), to deselect features, just right click on an empty space. To select a feature of any type just right click it and then press delete to delete it.)



OK, now I want you to place ANY metal deposit you want on the red dots indicated by my pic:

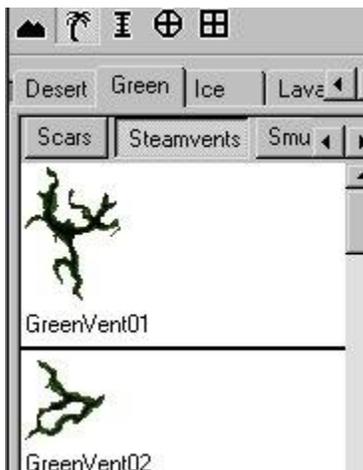


REMEMBER, THIS DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT LIKE MINE, BUT CLOSE WOULD BE GOOD.

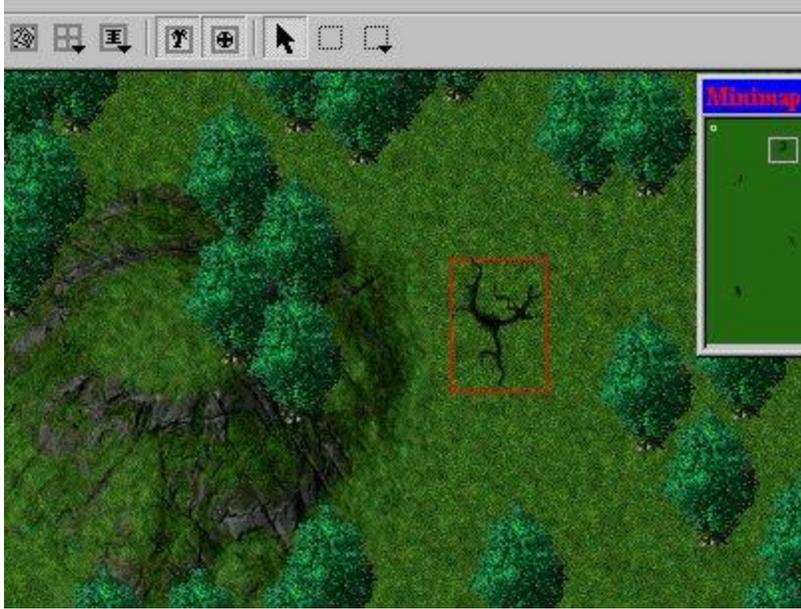
OK, you done that yet?? Good!

Now we have to get some secondary power to our bases. This comes in the form of Geothermal Power.

To find the geothermal 'vents', they are called 'SteamVents'



Once again I am going to let you choose which vents you want on your map, so take your pick. I do want you to place the vents near the base of each of the hills on the map. To place a geothermal vent, do it exactly like the metal, click on the one you want, move cursor to map and place it. It should look something like this:



OK. We are done here, SAVE YOUR WORK!!!!.....Done?? Good!

And we will move on to:

7- Check It

If this bit ain't simple I don't know what is! All you have to do here is Compress your map, 'Map - Compress Map', and then render the radar to be sure, 'Map - Refresh Final Minimap', and save your work again! And then we only have:

Step 8- The Home Run

OK, here we are going to add the final touches to the map to make it "Live"....well sort of...

What I want you to do is, click on the 'Map Settings' button on the quick tool bar:



You will be given this screen: (Copy what I have entered into your screen)



'Mission name' is what the map will appear as when in the skirmish menu.

'Mission description' is what appears at the bottom of that load map screen to tell you about the map.

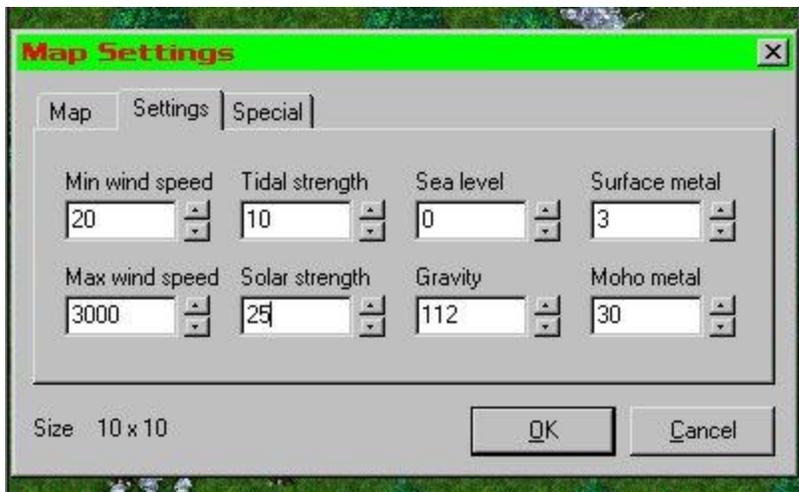
'Memory' is how much you would recommend someone have to play the map on their computer or online.

'AI Profile' is the AI the computer will use when playing the map.

'Planet' just helps the computer adapt the set AI to the type of map it is playing.

And 'players' is how many can play on the map.

Now click on the 'Settings' Tag and enter what I have:



'Min wind speed' is the least the wind will blow to. Max is the opposite.

Tidal strength is the amount of energy you will get from a tidal generator when you have water on a map.

Solar strength is the amount of energy you get from a STANDARD solar collector.

Sea level will be on 75, but on some tile sets the ground is below the water height and you can't build anything because the computer thinks you are under water. So set it to '0'.

Only EVER play with the gravity when making a moon map. Gravity affects how weapons work. E.G. if you had a big bertha on a map that was 80x80 (which is impossible, maps only go to 40x40....I think) and the map had a gravity of '0', the big bertha would be able to fire ALL the way across the map! So leave it at 112.

Surface Metal is to determine how much metal is extractable from the plain ground. If set correctly, you could extract metal from the ground without having a metal deposit under the extractor.

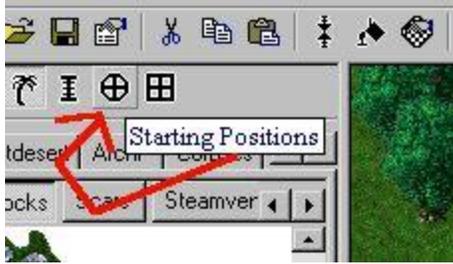
I don't know what Moho Metal does.

And don't worry about the 'Special' Tag, have a look if you want but don't touch anything.

Now, press OK and you are all but 5 minutes away from playing your map! Excited yet?

All we have to do now is, place the starting positions and save and PLAY!!!

To place the starting positions (where you start the game Einstein), press the 'Start Positions' button:



And place start positions 1 & 2 here: (Place start positions like any other feature and ON THE DOTS below, the number/color tell you what color you will be and where to place player 1 etc.)



Please use starting positions 1&2, the colors on this pic tell you what color you will be IN THE GAME!

Now, here we go! Save your work! And then exit Annihilator. If it asks you to save your work again, just click yes.

Now go to the directory you saved the file to. Cut the file (Ctrl + X) then go to your Total Annihilation Directory and Paste the file (Ctrl + V) into the main directory, e.g. c:\cavedog\totala. AND PLAY AWAY!!!!!! You should find your map in the skirmish map selection list. It will be called whatever you saved the file as, so 'Tutorial.ufo' -it will be called 'Tutorial'.

WOO HOOO!!!!!!!!!!!! WE'RE DONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Congratulations Commander, you now have the basic skills for making maps with Annihilator. I wish you all the best of luck in your search for the perfect map.

NOW! Go forth and make ME, and the TA community, some maps to be proud of!

Good Luck Commander...

Ok folks, I'm out of things to say so I will see you soon with my next two tutorials, the Water tutorial (simple) and then the Metal tutorial (intermediate).

See you later!!!!



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