

Enhanced AI for H5 - Tribes of the East

Important: this patch is compatible with H5 ToE 3.1 only. If you have version 3.0, please install the official 3.1 patch first.

QUICK INSTALLATION

Unpack the .zip file to your Heroes V Tribes of the East folder, by default Program Files/Ubisoft/Heroes of Might and Magic V – Tribes of the East.

If the individual files are not copied automatically into the right directory, copy the H5_Aladv_31j.exe and H5_AIProcess_31j.exe files to the bin folder, by default Program Files/Ubisoft/Heroes of Might and Magic V – Tribes of the East/bin. The EE_options.pak file needs to go into the data folder, and the maps *.h5m into the Maps folder.

Start the game by double clicking on the newly copied H5_Aladv_31j.exe file.

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MOTIVATION AND OVERVIEW

Welcome to the enhanced AI for Heroes of Might and Magic ToE!

This is not an official Ubisoft patch. Nevertheless the enhanced AI has been implemented by a professional AI programmer working with the C++ sources and received Ubisoft's approval.

The AI itself is a unique effort in the industry to create an AI for a premier strategy game completely without cheats. The goal is to give you AI opponents who know the ropes and can challenge the wits of the best veteran players.

The work in the last ten months has transformed Heroes V from a rough-shod simplistic rush AI to a nuanced challenge that requires you to use your wits to gain the upper hand. As a human you still have the advantage that you can see more easily the larger picture and develop a strategy with your planned development in mind.

The next major upgrade of the AI will address this with a strategic stage that has the AI coordinate its forces to capture the most relevant strategic targets. Combined with an unmatched lookahead depth, this will come very close to human strategic planning on grandmaster level.

Once this is done, it will transform the gameplay into something unique, a pure competition of skills, for players who vie for dominion on a map. The AI will adapt dynamically to the strength of the human player. It will give you the challenge you desire, but still allow players of any skill to win a map. This will offer unlimited replay value, because as your skills improve the game will give you new challenges.

The AI cheats we removed from Heroes V include additional creatures each week, build twice each day, experience boosts for heroes and big discounts on any purchases. Instead the enhanced AI has been developed to use the same resources as you and is up to the task.

You will note that the game plays differently now. Try to play the original ToE campaign again, or Marzhin's (now lead level designer for Heroes 6) incredible Legends of the Ancients campaign. You will be surprised how big the difference is.

With the enhanced AI comes a slew of new handcrafted maps. The latest addition is Markkur's outstanding Power of Dragons, which is a huge map that comes close to Heroes III's epic feeling. You will note that the turn processing is much faster with the enhanced AI. Power of Dragons would be nigh unplayable with the Heroes V vanilla.

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www.quantomas.de

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(AI programmer)

VERSION 3.1j - WHAT'S NEW

Town Portal Spell: the AI makes now intelligent use of the town portal spell. As a result, approaching the main castle of an enemy with a hero of level 20 or greater is no easy feat. Many missions play now differently.

Hero Flee Threshold: the hero flee threshold has been finely tuned, and the AI tries to flee at the last moment to inflict maximum damage to your forces.

Treasure Vaults: the AI visits now goodie huts for the resources and experience on heroic difficulty, and on hard and normal difficulty if it feels the human player is a threat.

Removed Cheats: the AI has been cleaned of cheats once more. There had been two of Nival's cheats remaining. One gave the AI a massive discount on all purchases, a second one gave the AI an experience boost. Both have been removed and the AI should now be entirely free of cheats. You can observe how it struggles to overcome the same obstacles as you and it is up to the task.

However, there is one caveat. It turns out that the original campaign maps were designed with the discount cheat in mind. For this to work, an optional AI cheat slider has been added to the game options. This allows you to provide the AI with a discount cheat for a limited number of days to give it the capability to rush opponents. This is active by default in the campaigns.

Improved Castle Build Orders: the AI code for building up the castles with scarce resources has been substantially improved. Still, in rare cases it can happen that the AI is severely hampered on maps with extreme resource scarcity. The game setup options that determine the players' starting boni give you additional flexibility to adjust the starting resources.

Included Reference Maps: the reference maps included in the release have been expanded. This release brings you for the first time Markkur's outstanding Power of Dragons. It's a huge map with underground and a world full of wonder that comes close to Heroes III epic feeling. Also included are Dread Realms and a Hall of Decision Duel map. Icy Defense, Island Hoppers and My Home Is My Castle have been upgraded to revision 3. Icy Defense is now even more challenging with a strong necromancer rising in the east.

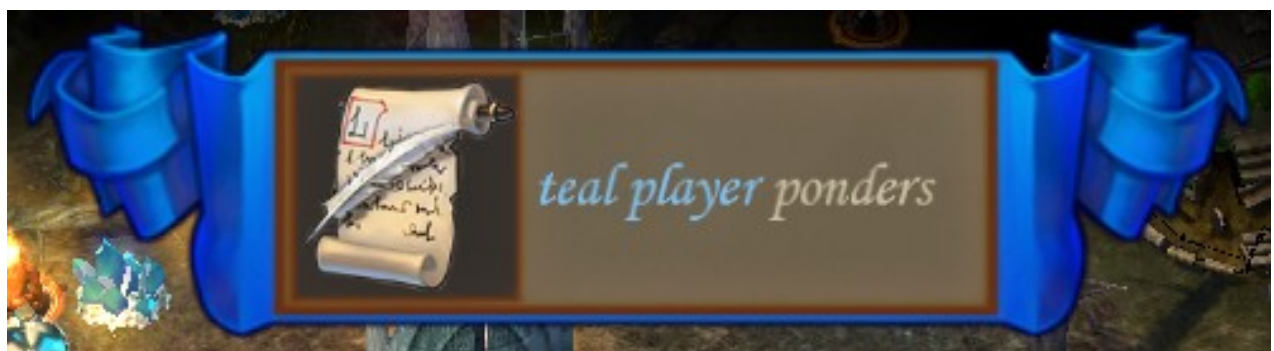
Neutral Champions: they are better balanced by not having access to level 5 destruction magic spells and other high level spells unless they have learned these in a regular way. The other spells removed are Holy Word, Curse of the Netherworld, Frenzy and Divine Vengeance. Additionally, the probability for a neutral champion to gain access to any destruction magic spell has been reduced. The monster tooltips indicate now to what extent neutral champions alter the threat level.



Upgraded creature tooltips

Enhanced options: the default setting is now identic to Heroes ToE vanilla.

Improved link to the AI process: the H5_AIProcess is now identified by its own version extension, e.g. H5_AIProcess_31i.exe to guard against installation errors and to allow for different versions to be installed side-by-side. Additionally, the game notifies you with a message if an AI turn cannot be processed.



If you see this message, there is something amiss.

INCLUDED MAPS

To install the maps, copy the *.h5m files to the maps folder, by default Program Files/Ubisoft/Heroes of Might and Magic V - Tribes of the East/Maps. The new maps will be available the next time you start the game. Please tick the "Show random maps" box if the maps do not show up.

The newest addition is Markkur's outstanding Power of Dragons. It's a huge map with underground and a world full of places to visit that comes close to Heroes III epic feeling. Also included are Dread Realms and a Hall of Decision Duel map. Icy Defense, Island Hoppers and My Home Is My Castle have been upgraded to revision 3. Icy Defense is now even more challenging with a strong necromancer rising in the east. Island Hoppers gives the Haven player a small additional boost because of its high difficulty.

With 3.1i mostly all maps play differently because of the upgrades and removed cheats. The gameplay is now more evenhanded and resembles the classic Heroes III feeling.

ENHANCED OPTIONS



The diagram illustrates the connection between map icons and game options. On the left, three map icons are shown in a vertical stack, each with a label and a line pointing to a specific option in the 'Options' menu on the right.

- Map 1 (Treasure chest):** Labeled "You and the AI players start with equal resources". This points to the *Time Limit: unlimited* option in the menu.
- Map 2 (Sword):** Labeled "Aggressive AI". This points to the *Difficulty: Hard* option in the menu.
- Map 3 (Shield):** Labeled "Defensive AI". This points to the *Lookahead Depth: Heroic* option in the menu.

Additional options in the menu are also labeled with lines pointing to them:

- Balance processing speed and difficulty* points to the *Lookahead Depth: Heroic* option.
- Heroes defend neutral stacks* points to the *Neutral Champions: Hard* option.
- Guardians use artifacts to defend themselves* points to the *Artefact Guards* checkbox.
- Taxes require smart resource management* points to the *Taxes* checkbox.
- Give your hero more skills* points to the *Eight Skills* checkbox.

The 'Options' menu itself is titled "Options" and contains the following settings:

- Time Limit: unlimited*
- Difficulty: Hard*
- Lookahead Depth: Heroic*
- Neutral Champions: Hard*
- AI rush discount: off*
- ☒ *Artefact Guards*
- ☒ *Taxes*
- ☒ *Eight Skills*

Adjustable lookahead depth: you can adjust how much processing the AI does to finetune its behaviour. It's recommended to set this to maximum on medium size and smaller maps. On bigger maps, depending on the map layout and number of players, this setting can make the game much faster in the later game stages.

Neutral champions: heroes will defend neutral stacks, giving you a new challenge. You might find yourself surprised how much resistance a small stack of imps can put up. Be careful! On easy, neutral champions appear only if artifact guards are enabled to defend the artifacts and treasure vaults. On normal, they appear every now and then, on hard approximately every second battle. On heroic neutral champions will nearly always be there. For a strategically clean game, it is recommended to set neutral champions to easy and enable artefact guards. This implies neutral champions support stacks that guard artefacts and show up in treasure vaults, but mines, regular adventure map objects, region guards and so on will not exact an additional toll on your forces. What setting you use depends on the map.

AI rush discount: this option provides the AI with a discount on all purchases for a limited number of days. This option is mainly intended for campaign maps that require a rush behaviour for certain opponents. Turning this option on makes the game considerably more difficult.

Artefact guards: guardians hold artifacts and use them to defend themselves. The places on the map where a guarded artifact has been, are filled instead by a campfire. I.e. you will no longer be able to spot where an artifact is hidden. Additionally, this option halves the mana regeneration of heroes. Instead the campfires give you a boost to your movement points and mana.

Taxes: this is not a handicap but applies to all players on the map equally. At the beginning of each new turn the king collects 50% in taxes from your gold income. This significantly reduces the pace of the game and requires smart resource management. The resources you acquire on the adventure map and fight for against neutral monsters matter all the more.

Eight skills: enables two additional skill slots for all heroes.

Choice of aggressive vs. defensive AI: on the start game screen you can choose the AI type for each computer player (unless the map maker has disabled it); the sword stands for an aggressive AI, while the shield indicates an AI that will tend to guard its home base; don't count on it that it will not come for you if it perceives weakness.

Equal start resources for the AI: on the start game screen you can choose instead of a resource bonus that all computer players start with the same amount of resources that you receive at the begin of the game. This provides for more interesting scenarios on hard and impossible difficulty settings.

Together these enhancements give you many possible options to customize your game. You can alter the pace and difficulty. Neutral champions are tough, even more so on higher game difficulty levels.

INTERNATIONALIZATION

If you prefer to play the game in a different language than English, you can have the latest enhancements display the text in the language of your choice.

Included in the .zip file is a `EE_options_text.pak` that contains the needed text messages used by the game. This is an archive that can be opened like a .zip file and holds approximately thirty files. While this sounds like a lot at first, each of these files holds typically only a single line of text, so that the translation could be easily done within half an hour. The translation process is straightforward, simply replace the text as you see fit, but leave the text in brackets `<>` as it is.

If you choose to translate the file, rename it, e.g. `EE_options_text_ru.pak`, and place it in the data folder as explained in the installation procedure. Please consider sharing the file with the Heroes community for your native tongue. Maybe someone has already done this for you.

INCLUDED FILES

H5_Aladv_31j.exe

The main game executable. Don't rename it to avoid dll loading conflicts.

H5_AIProcess_31j.exe

Separate AI process.

EE_options.pak

The interface for the enhanced options. Needs to go into the data folder.

EE_options_text.pak

A copy of the texts in the interface for the enhanced options, provided for internationalization.

Power_of_Dragons.h5m

Power_of_Dragons.pdf

A reference of epic proportions and equally epic gameplay. This map comes with its own readme.

Icy_Defense ver.3.h5m, Island_Hoppers_3.h5m,

My_Home_Is_My_Castle_3.h5m, Dread_Realms.h5m, HoD_Duel.h5m

Reference maps intended as challenges for veteran players on hard difficulty or above.

KNOWN ISSUES

Multiplayer

Only hotseat works. Some of the newly added advanced options are not available.

Workaround: use the original version 3.1 for hosted multiplayer games.

Random Map Generator

Some of the advanced options are inaccessible and the random map generator is limited to features available in version 3.0 only.

Workaround: close the ai mod and start the official version. Generate the random map(s) to your specifications. Close the game and restart the ai mod again. The maps you created will be available now and playable with the ai mod.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Pitsu: for the improved message box mod.