QUICK START GUIDE

What is this?

Ashes of the Singularity is a new real-time strategy game whose alpha
build has just gone into Steam Early Access.

Why Stardock says Early Access isn't for Everyone

• Ashes currently has very high hardware requirements due to its new rendering engine: 64-bit OS, 8GB of system memory, 2GB video card and at least 4 cores on your CPU.

• There's no tutorial yet. In fact, the walkthrough guide links to this article.

• Not feature complete, not ready for non-RTS players to try out yet.

If you're still ready for annihilating all opposition across planets in the universe, read on.

This walkthrough assumes you know how to play real-time strategy games. We'll be referring to Sins of a Solar Empire, Starcraft, Supreme Commander, Total Annihilation, Kohan and Company of Heroes since these are games that have influenced this game's design.

The Premise

The year is 2178. The technological singularity has arrived and Humans have become so powerful that they individually control entire planets. The ultimate resource that these Post-Humans desire is called Turinium and few planets are suitable to be converted into it. Conflict is inevitable.

You, the player, start out with a single Nexus and must command it to construct Engineers, will construct factories, research matrices, metal and radioactive extractors, defenses, aircraft, dreadnoughts and much more in order to capture the Turinium generators already seeded onto the planet and annihilate any opposition that may be trying the same.

The Basic Game Mechanics

If you've played Total Annihilation (or Supreme Commander) and Company of Heroes, then you will have no problem with Ashes of the singularity.

Like Company of Heroes, the map is broken up into regions. Captured that are contiguous to your Nexus provide you with resources.   Like Total Annihilation, resources are streamed in and out meaning that resources are spent as the unit is built rather than paid for up front.

Players interact with the map similarly to Sins of a Solar Empire through an empire tree and zooming in/out to see more of the map. Like Company of Heroes, there is a mini-map that focuses on showing where your control groups are and the types of regions on the map.

Before you Begin

Are your video drivers up to date? If the answer is NO, then get the latest drivers. If the answer is YES but only because they stopped making new drivers for your card back in 2012, you won't be able to play this game.

Seriously, get the latest drivers. Both AMD and NVIDIA have released updated drivers that optimize for Ashes of the Singularity's Alpha builds.

DirectX 11 vs. DirectX 12

Video drivers for DirectX 12 are still evolving. Use the Benchmark to see which works best for you. Generally, if you can use DirectX 12, do so.

Getting Started

The main menu will have 3 relevant options at this stage:

- Single Player
- Multiplayer
- Benchmark

Single Player Gaming

For your first game, choose a 2 player map and change the AI to beginner.

NOTE ON AI: Don't assume because this is an RTS that the AI is a push over or has to cheat to win. It may very well be the world's first real-time multi-core AI (which means that it calculates its strategy on multiple cores simultaneously). Ashes is being developed by a combination of the Civilization IV and V leads, GalCiv leads, Sins of a Solar Empire veterans. People who take AI very seriously.

In short: Don't ruin your first game experience by assuming you will beat the AI. Keep it on beginner and work your way up.

Into the Game

Because this is early access, there are a lot of annoying UI deficiencies which we'll walk you around below:

AVOID RAGE QUITTING:

A player wins by getting a critical mass of Turinium. The game doesn't yet display enough information on this balance of power. So for now, keep an eye on the player's Turinium levels on the right.

The 3 place-holder icons that are always present matter. As the beta progresses, this UI will get a lot better. For now:

1. Construction Options 2. Research Options 3. Ability Options

The Controls

Mouse
- LEFT-CLICK to select a unit.
- LEFT-DRAG to select several units.
- RIGHT-CLICK to send to a destination.
- RIGHT-DRAG to move the map. (the game will have options to change the bindings).
- SCROLL-WHEEL to zoom in and out. Holding down this button will let you rotate the map and holding the SHIFT key while doing it will let you change the camera pitch.

Keyboard
- F1 will select an idle engineer (we will update the UI to display idle engineers)
- SHIFT will show all current orders and allow you to say up waypoints
- ALT will show the weapon range of your units
- CTRL and a number key will set up control groups. This is important because control groups are shown on the map.
- # keys. Once you set up a Control group, you can hit the number key to select that control group.
- TAB will allow you to tab into the next group of keyboard short-cuts for a selected unit or building.

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Your First Moves

Select your Engineer
Order him to build a factory

Select your Nexus
Order it to build another Engineer. Think of these Engineers like the Engineers in Company of Heroes (or as I prefer to play, the Pioneers...)

Engineers can build things but also capture.

Keep an eye on your income
By building a factory and another Engineer you are consuming 22 metal per second while only producing 5 metal per second. Much of the skill comes in making sure you don't ruin your economy so keep an eye on your spending.

Start building metal extractors
With your second Engineer order it to build Metal extractors. This is a quick way of doubling your income.

Have Engineers help with construction
Order the engineer who built the factory to help build units by selecting the engineer and right-clicking on the factory (you don't have to do this, it's just a suggestion, other players just build more factories). There are diminishing returns for doing this (50% for the first one, 25% for the next, etc.).
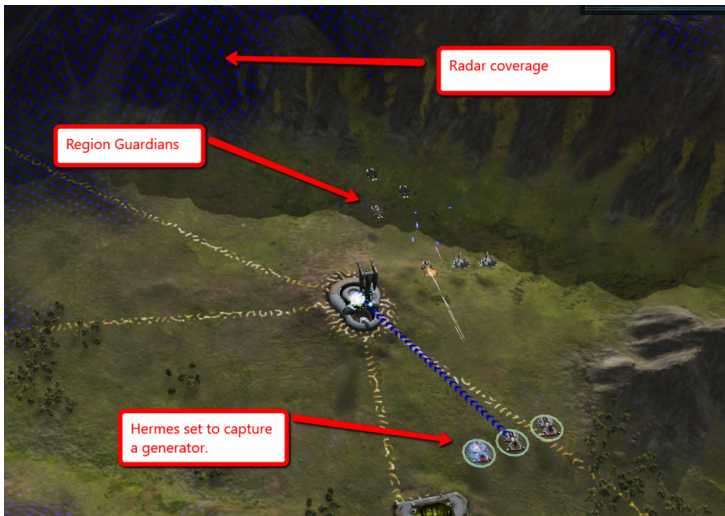
Build a Hermes (scout unit).

Capture Regions

With your first units, go out and start capturing regions. Zoom out and tell your unit to go capture a region.

You will run into the Creeps. These are neutral guardians that begin to spawn at regions after a minute or so.

Radar coverage

Region Guardians

Hermes set to capture a generator.

Build a Research Matrix

Once you have captured a couple of regions where at least one has radioactives, build a research matrix.

Engineer

Actions   Production

Research Matrix
Time: 60 seconds
Metal: 300
Radioactives: 100
Generates Tech points used to unlock advanced technologies

Research Matrices produce tech points:

Draginol
22 / 100
2

The points are used to level up your technology:

Actions   Produc   Combat Tech

Logistics
Tech Cost: 100
Increases the maximum number of units that can be built.

Logistics will increase the # of units you can have. It must be researched via tech points.

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Know the Units and How to Use Them

There are currently 4 Frigates, 4 Cruisers and 3 Dreadnoughts in the game for the Post-Humans plus 3 aircraft. Each one has a specific role in the game:

- Hermes. Fast scout unit with radar. Expensive but great way to grab regions fast.
- Brute. Tough little short-range unit, great for taking out other Frigates.
- Archer. More fragile but shoots rockets that are great against Cruisers.
- Medic. Heals nearby units.
- Artemis. Long-Range artillery.
- Zeus. Mass destroyer of Frigates.
- Apollo. Anti Air, Anti-Drone unit.
- Nemesis. Expensive, lethal sniper unit. Great against Dreadnoughts and Cruisers.
- Cronus. Massive Siege Dreadnought.
- Hyperion. Area control Dreadnought.
- Prometheus. Destroyer of other Dreadnoughts.
- Pan. Scout aircraft, provides wide range of visual and radar coverage.
- Fury. Air superiority fighter.
- Hades. Massive expensive bomber for destroying buildings.

Players can also take these units and combine them together to form an army that acts as Meta unit. Once you do this, they will work together as a single unit.

Other Starting Tips

- Build Sensor Towers. Many units can strike beyond visual sight if they have radar contacts to hit.
- Build Defenses. Smarties are cheap defenses fire rockets that can defend an area from ground and air attack. Sentinels are much more expensive but will annihilate most units in a single hit. Falcon AAs are good to prevent swarms of Hades bombers from devastating your bases. Drone bays are really good against large incursions of frigates.
- Seriously, keep an eye on the victory points. Stardock will be addressing the UI on this but victory points can sneak up on you if you're not paying attention.
- Look for flanking options. A region must be contiguous with the player's Nexus for it to receive resources. Make a note how the regions connect to each other and see if you can cut them off.

DOs and DON'Ts of Early Access

- DO post on the forums with your ideas, suggestions and general feedback. The team is particularly looking for feedback on different methods being used to convey information to the player (i.e. UI).
- DON'T insist that the developers make the game into a clone of a game you want. I.e. this isn't Starcraft with more macro mechanics or the second coming of Supreme Commander.
- DO keep up on the Alpha and Beta builds so that you can use your position as an early access member to influence the way the game develops.
- DON'T judge the game based on an alpha. The gameplay is in a very early state.

Minimum System Requirements

- 64-bit Windows 7 / 8 / 10 OS
- Quad Core CPU
- 8 GB Memory
- 2 GB DirectX 11 Video Card
- 1600x900 Display Resolution
- High-speed Internet Connection