



An Epic Banana Production

(Chapter 2)

About *The Establishment*

What is it?

It's an action game of stealth and strategy. The emphasis is not on all-out shooting, but on staying hidden, staying quiet, and striking when necessary.

What is the plot?

Ben is a mercenary. He does odd jobs for odd people, and doesn't ask questions if the pay is good enough. He's been doing this for as long as he can remember, and he manages to live off it.

This mission seemed ordinary enough. At least, the money was. But as soon as the details were revealed, he could see that this run wouldn't be the normal kind. For one, the target was a classified document, secreted away deep inside a well-protected building.

But, of course, the pay was good.....

What is the objective?

The objective of your mission is to retrieve the documents and escape the Establishment without being seen or heard. As a stealth thief, you must leave minimum evidence that you were ever there- that includes leaving no bodies and tripping no alarms.

Remember- You're a thief, not a murderer. Killing the guards is possible and won't interfere with the completion of your mission, but will lower your score in the end.

Of course, you can still complete the mission if you do get seen or kill someone, but your overall thief score at the end will be lower. Points are awarded for not killing people, not tripping the alarm, and retrieving the documents, among other things.

To end your mission, walk off the screen to the left of where you start.

What's my equipment?

Before you start on your espionage mission, you decide how much money you will bring to fund your project. The more money you bring, the more equipment you can buy, and the game gets easier. You can see your current difficulty level underneath your funds at the title screen. Toggle your funding with the arrow buttons on the screen.

Don't be afraid to do a few runs without bringing any equipment at all, consider these scouting missions to scope out the Establishment and get a feel for play.

On a likewise note, don't be afraid to do a few runs totally decked out with weapons, explosives, and armor. This is the instinct of most players anyway.

To get a true feel of how the Establishment was meant to be played, experiment with the funds on the normal difficulty setting.

For more information, check the equipment chapter.

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Requirements

I only have a vague idea of the requirements for running this game, but you probably won't want to run it on a slower mac. A performa is about as low as you want to go. Other requirements include:

- ~12 Megs hard drive space
- ~7 Megs RAM
- Color monitor
- Perhaps system 7 or higher?
- Stuff

Performance

If performance really is a problem, there are a few things you can do to speed it up a bit.

Turn music off. When music is turned on, there is a slight delay while the game loads some MIDI. The music will play when you get spotted by a guard, or during other intense moments. By turning music off, the MIDI will not play and will therefore not have to load.

Turn samples off. I don't recommend this, as the sounds add a lot to *The Establishment*. Turning the sounds off may offer a slight performance boost, but only as a last resort.

Increase the memory. By allocating more RAM to the game, performance may be enhanced. Generally, this can be done in the "Get Info" box.

Quit other programs. If other programs are running in the background, the game will run choppy or slowly. Quit those programs to remedy the situation.

Controls and Status

Basic Controls

Arrow keys- Move Ben
Control- Holster/Unholster your gun
Shift- Action key
Space Bar- Reload your gun
+/- - Change your speed

Specific Controls

G (grenade) - Ready a grenade
W (wirecutters) - Use wirecutters
E (Explosives) - Place C4
B (Body) - Pick up body
D (Drop) - Drop body
C (Chloroform) - Use chloroform
H (Heartbeat) - Activate short-range detection mode

Status Bar



Visibility- This bar measures how visible you are. Hiding in shadows and behind obstacles will make you harder to see. The lower your visibility, the less likely guards are to notice you.

Stealth- This bar measures how much noise you're making. If you make too much noise, a guard will hear it and come to investigate. You always make noise when walking, but you make less noise if you walk slower.

Vitality- This is how much life Ben has left. Normally, Ben might be able to survive five to six shots from an enemy guard. Depending on what armor you buy, Ben's vitality could range from 100% to 200%.

Clip- This tells you how many bullets are left in your clip, compared to the max number of bullets per clip.

Speed- This measures your current speed. The maximum speed is 25, the minimum is 1. The slower you move, the less noise you make and the less visible you become.

Action Readout- Underneath your speed meter is a blank space. Occasionally text will appear in this space, telling you a specific action that Ben can do; this ranges from reading signs, showing your ID, using the grappling gun, etc.

Equipment

This is a listing of the equipment you can buy at the outset of your mission. Additional information can be found in the equipment screen in the game.

Please note that while the emphasis is on staying hidden and killing nobody, every thief needs some weapon for protection and security; if you are seen, it is better to have something to defend yourself with.

You may only buy one gun and one set of armor; no buying an M9 and an MP5, or putting an additional layer of kevlar over your combat armor. However, you can always buy an overcoat, even if you have some sort of body armor already.

You will have an infinite amount of clips, grenades, C4 cubes, etc. Running out of ammo isn't a concern, but running your clip dry is.

Weapons

M9 Beretta



Cost- \$200

Description- This is the basic gun. It has an eight round clip. When coupled with a silencer, it is ideal for stealth approaches.

MP5 Submachine Gun



Cost- \$430

Description- This is an automatic light firearm with a thirty-two round magazine. While it also accepts a silencer, it is probably overkill for a stealth approach. Ideal for direction confrontation.

MK-2 Grenades



Cost- \$275

Description- Small fragmentation grenades. They have a small lethal radius, but be careful with them nevertheless. Noisy, bright weapons such as these are more suited for direct confrontation.

C4 Explosives



Cost- \$175

Description- C4 explosives are small, pliable cubes of flexible explosives in plastic. Ben uses these by fitting each cube with a time-delay detonator and placing it on the ground. Place one, and run!

Chloroform



Cost- \$150

Description- Chloroform is a powerful sedative originally used to knock out medical patients. It is used by dabbing it on a rag and holding it over the enemy's mouth and nose. This weapon will knock out, but not kill guards. Ideal for sneaking up on guards from behind and taking them out.

Armor

Flak Jacket



Cost- \$100

Description- This is a small vest of protective metal. It might stop a few bullets from light-arms fire, but don't expect too much. It increases Ben's vitality by 25%.

Kevlar Vest



Cost- \$150

Description- This is a heavier, full-torso armor that was intended to stop bullets. More effective than the flak jacket, it could make the difference between life and death. It increases Ben's vitality by 50%.

Heavy Combat Armor



Cost- \$225

Description- This is a full-body set of armor meant for stopping high-powered rifle rounds and the like. It comes with a layer of chest protection and a helmet. When bought, it increases Ben's vitality by 100%.

Overcoat



Cost- \$100

Description- The overcoat will hide your guns, causing any guards who see you to think you're merely a tourist who got lost. Without the overcoat, any guns you have will be clearly visible, and the guards will attempt to shoot you on sight.

Gadgets

Fake ID



Cost- \$300

Description- This is an ID created by careful analysis of preexisting Establishment IDs. It could come in handy in a number of situations.

Grappling Gun



Cost- \$140

Description- The grappling gun allows you to rappel up the side of the building to gain access to the roof. This gives you an alternate ingress point to the Establishment.

Heartbeat Sensor



Cost- \$150

Description- The heartbeat sensor works by detecting an ultra-low frequency field emitted by a beating heart. It will warn you of off-screen enemies, and when activated for short range, will pinpoint any on-screen enemies that you may not see.

Laser Disrupter



Cost- \$165

Description- The Establishment is protected by a grid of infra-red laser systems. When tripped, the lasers will activate the alarm. The laser disrupter package gives you a means to safely remove the lasers without tripping them. When using it, note that you must install a device on BOTH diodes in order for the cutter to work!

Silencer



Cost- \$200

Description- The silencer works by reducing the muzzle flash of a gun through expansion, cooling, and delaying it's exit. The result is a greatly reduced noise. A must have for any stealth approach with a gun. It can be fitted to both the beretta and the MP5.

Wirecutters



Cost- \$60

Description- This is a pair of high-grade, heavy duty wirecutters. They can be used for sabotaging various electronics inside the Establishment.

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Special Controls

This section will provide information on the controls for various special areas where regular controls don't apply. Effort was made to make the controls as intuitive and similar to the normal controls as possible.

Equipment Screen



This screen is where you buy your equipment before heading into the mission.

- 1) This screen displays the item being considered for purchase.
- 2) This display tells you the name, cost, and clip size of the currently selected item.
- 3) The description will provide background information and uses for the currently selected item.
- 4) This is a listing of the items in the current category. Click on an item's name to select it.
- 5) The appearance display shows you how Ben will look when he goes into the mission. Visible weapons will incriminate you.
- 6) These two readouts display how much money you have for funds, as well as your vitality.
- 7) The "Weapons," "Armor," and "Gadgets" buttons toggle which category of items you browse. "Buy" will buy the item being considered, "Start" will start you on your mission.
- 8) This is a listing of equipment. As you buy things, their names will highlight on the list.

Rappelling



If you buy a grappling gun, you can use it to rappel up the side of the Establishment. Care must be taken to make sure nobody sees your silent ascent to the roof, or else you may end up dead. You can only pass between floors by climbing up over a window. Controls are as follows:

- Left Arrow- Rappel left
- Right Arrow- Rappel right
- Up Arrow- Climb
- Down Arrow- Descend

Air Ducts

Crawling through the air ducts is a good way to get around unobserved. The controls are very straightforward.

Arrow Keys- Crawl

Elevator Shaft

Climbing up and down the elevator shafts is a good way to move between floors without being seen. You can climb on the chains or any pipes you see in the wall. The controls are:

Up Arrow- Climb up

Down Arrow- Climb down

Left Arrow- Shimmy along the wall leftward

Right Arrow- Shimmy along the wall rightward

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Getting Around Guards

Outside the Establishment, the guards are a lot more lenient. You do not need to kill any of the guards on the outside if you don't act suspicious. Remember, this building is a tourist site, and people wandering around outside at night is a normal sight for a guard. Unless you walk around with an MP5 slung over your shoulder, or a pistol at your side, the guards will pretty much ignore you.

Guards are everywhere inside the Establishment. To be a true thief, Ben must remain silent and unseen. There are some rudimentary tactics to employ to attain both levels and go unnoticed.

Silent. Walking at full speed (25) is essentially running. You will make the most noise and not be stealthy whatsoever. Needless to say, walking slower will make less noise. To sneak up behind a guard to knock him out with chloroform, you will want to be going slow enough that he doesn't hear your approach, yet fast enough to catch up to him.

Missing with your gun and hitting the wall with a bullet will cause enough noise to raise a guard's suspicion. Ben gets less accurate the farther he is from his target, so make sure you have a clean shot.

Also note that different surfaces will make different levels of noise. A rug is much quieter than metal, obviously.

Unseen. Staying unseen is perhaps more important than staying silent. Basically, stay where the guard can't see you. That includes hiding behind bookcases, walls, plants, and anything that's handy. An example of Ben successfully hiding behind a flagpole:



Wait until the guard's back is turned. If you were to use your silenced pistol to take out one guard on the outside of the Establishment, for example, you'd wait for him to turn his back before you unholster your gun. Otherwise, he'd see you pull your gun, yell for you to drop your weapon, and make lots of noise. This seems obvious, but some people don't realize that the guards have dynamic lines of sight.

Not all guards are armed the same. The guards inside the Establishment are armed according to the security level they patrol. On the first floor, where tourists are admitted and a professional look must be sustained, the guards are armed only lightly, with .40 pistols.



On the second and third floors, however, the guards are armed with MP5s. They can and will make mincemeat out of you quickly, unless you follow the first rules of thievery and remain silent and unseen.



Getting around the Establishment

Alarms. Occasionally you'll run across some security systems, whether they are cameras, lasers, or switches. Tripping any of these security measures will cause the alarm to ring out; the element of stealth will be lost, and guards will come down to your position rapidly.

Lasers are the hardest of the devices to spot. They are infrared beams, so they won't be visible to the naked eye. Looks for two diodes aligned on opposite walls. Sometimes they're given away by a flicker of red light.

The laser disrupter was made for the sole purpose of cutting the laser beams that you may find inside the Establishment- Walk close to one of the diodes and hit the action key to activate the cutter. Note that a device must be installed on BOTH diodes for the cutter to work.

It is possible to deactivate the alarm somewhere inside the Establishment, probably in one of the security rooms. It is also possible to sabotage the alarm system at one point.

The metal detector. Obviously, there are some problems with just walking in through the front door, and the metal detector is the main one. If you have any guns or grenades on your person, the detector will make it known.

You could try several approaches to the detector; sabotaging it or creating a distraction comes to mind....

Airducks and elevator shafts. Guards don't patrol inside these obscure locations, so they are useful in getting around the Establishment. Airducks can move you around your current floor, and the elevator shaft can move you between floors.

Backdoors and alternate penetration routes. If the front door isn't working for you, try getting in the building from some other way.

Locked doors. There are some locked doors in the Establishment. Reconnaissance has shown there to be a card-key system inside the Establishment, so at least some of the doors can be unlocked by a key card. Other doors are just locked, and you'll have to find some way around them. In some cases, a nearby guard may hold the key, though he obviously isn't going to just give it to you.

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FAQ

Why is there a long delay while each screen loads, with a message that reads, "importing movie?"

This is when the game loads its music in the form of a MIDI file. The process can be time consuming, and for that reason you can turn the music off in the options menu.

Are there any codes for "the Establishment?"

Not really.

Performance is really choppy and crappy. Is there any way to improve it?

Read the "Requirements and Performance" chapter for information on that. If you have a slow machine, though, it's going to be rough.

I've discovered a secret room with a [removed to preserve secrecy]. What in the world were you thinking?

There are a few secret rooms in the Establishment. Generally they were either a test for a new AI scheme or just a really crazy idea.

I can't find any use for [insert gadget here]. Why did you put it in the game?

Every gadget has a use in at least two situations, except the grappling gun. Rest assured that whatever gadget you may think is useless actually does have a use.

I've stolen the document, now what do I do?

You can end the mission at any time by going back to the screen where you started and leaving to the left. This will bring up a

screen asking if you want to end the mission; end the mission if you've stolen the documents.

I can't find a place to use the grappling gun. Where is it?

From the front of the building, go left one screen. You ought to be in a deserted, little cul-de-sac. Walk up to the side of the building. The words "grappling gun" ought to appear underneath your speed meter, indicating you can use the grappling gun. Press shift, and you're away!

I've noticed some really freaky bugs in the game. What do I do?

Ignore them. I generally don't re-release updated versions of my games, so don't worry about it. Just live with it.

The game just quit on me! What's up with that?

After an extended period of play, the game may just decide to quit. Near as I can tell, this is related to the amount of memory you have allocated to the game; allocate more, and you probably won't get the problem as frequently.

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Contact Information

I'm Ryan Foltz. I work with Epic Banana Software. Like the game? Hate the game? Have a burning non-sequitur on your mind? Then drop me a line at foltz@sacoriver.net. Generally, I try to respond to every message I get, but usually I can't do so in a prompt, day-to-day fashion.

Itching for more Epic Banana games? As of writing this, there are two sites for Epic Banana wares,

http://welcome.to/the_sphere

and

<http://www.epicbanana.com>

Epicbanana.com may not be around long!

I don't ask for anything for my games; they are all freeware. That means feel free to wear them.