

This document covers the creation of a simple PC Dash card, with icon graphics and background image. It is recommended that you read the command centre section of the manual before starting this tutorial, it will explain some of the functions in greater detail.

Creating a PCDash™ card

STAGE 1

The first stage involves creating all of the commands, and their associated keyboard commands that will be relevant for use on PCDash. Key presses for a game can usually be found in either the game manual, or on a keyboard shortcuts sheet supplied with the game.

Open the PCDash command centre. Make sure that no previous file is loaded by selecting new from the file menu. A blank command file is now ready for programming.

In this stage we shall add the following commands to the command list.

Command Name	Key press
Move Forward	Up Arrow
Move Backward	Down Arrow
Move Left	Left Arrow
Move Right	Right Arrow
Fire	Space Bar
Jump	J
Crouch	C
Change Weapon	Left CTRL
Change to View 1	Shift & F1
Change to View 2	Shift & F2
Change to View 3	Shift & F3

Click on the commands tab in the command centre. A table should appear, with two columns – Command and Keystrokes.

The command centre defaults to using advanced mode for entering in commands. Advanced mode gives the options of renaming and copying commands, as well as switching between automatic and manual key press entering modes. For this tutorial we are only concerned with simple mode editing. Click the simple button:

You will notice some of the advanced buttons disappear. Click the Add button to start creating commands. A window will appear, with a text box for command name, and a box for the keystrokes (key presses). Select the text box for the command name, and enter in the name of the first command – Move Forwards. Now click the text box for keystrokes.

When the keystrokes box is selected any key presses entered will be assigned as the keystrokes for that command. The key for move forwards is the up arrow. Press the up arrow key. In the keystrokes text box the following should appear: GREY-UP. This shows that the key "grey up" (the up arrow key) is assigned as the key for move forwards. Click OK.

In the table on the commands tab you should see the first entry – Move forwards with the keystroke of grey-up.

Click the Add button again, this time to enter the command for move backwards. In the "command name" box enter move backwards. In the keystrokes box press the down arrow key – the text GREY-DOWN should appear. Click OK.

There should now be two entries in the command table. The table automatically sorts the commands into

alphabetical order, so move backward will be above move forward.

Carry on adding the commands for left, right, fire, jump, crouch and change weapon.

The keystroke for "change to view 1" requires the shift key to be held down while the F1 key is pressed. Click the add button to add a new command. Enter Change to View 1 as the control name. Select the keystrokes tab. Hold down the shift key (either shift key) and press F1. The following should appear in the keystrokes box: LSHIFT+F1. This shows that the left shift was held down, and F1 pressed.

Carry on adding all of the commands.

These commands are now ready to be assigned to buttons the PCDash.

STAGE 2

On the right side of the screen should be a view of PCDash. If no view is visible, go to the view menu and select "show PC-Dash".

Commands can be assigned to the PCDash in two ways. The first method is to drag the command from the command list table on a button in the PCDash window.



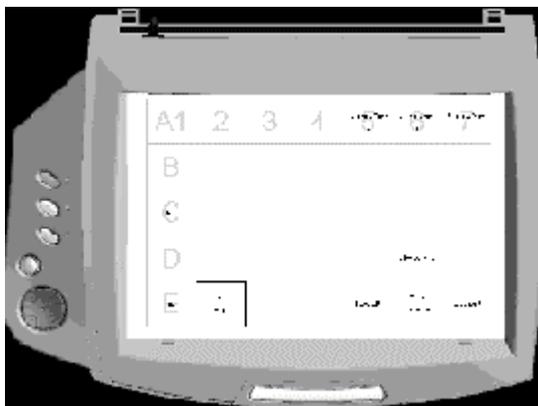
The second method is to select the appropriate button in the PCDash window (say the top left – A1), and select the "Keys" tab. Click the simple button on the keys tab, to remove some of the advanced commands. Click the Down arrow on the combo box labeled "Button Press Command:" -

A list of created commands will appear - select move forward from the list. Move forward is now assigned to button A1 (top left button).

To drag and drop, make sure the commands tab is visible, and select a command in the command table. Click and hold with the left mouse button on this command, and drag the mouse over a button on the PCDash window. That command is now assigned to the button.

In the PCDash window the name of the command should appear in the face of the button. Part of the name may not be visible – simply because the line of text is too long to fit into the display, this does not matter however.

Use either method to add all of the commands to the PCDash – layout the commands as in the diagram below:



The basic layout of the PCDash file is now completed.

The barcode display at the bottom left of the window should now show a small green bar. The more commands added, the longer the barcode will get – the green bar shows the comparative length of the barcode. If the green bar travels past the centre line on the barcode display, that means the card will have two barcodes. If two barcodes are required then the green bar will turn yellow.



The card can now be printed and used in PCDash. Go to the file menu and select print. Make sure that foldover is checked, you can change to settings for the printer clicking Setup. Press OK to start the print. The foldover option will print the Command file, with the barcode on the top of the control area. Since the barcode needs to be on the back of the card, it will need to be folded over. A fold line is marked on the printed sheet. The sheet will need to be trimmed up to the outside border lines. A pair of scissors can be used for trimming, however to get neat edges a sharp knife and metal ruler are recommended.

Once printed and folded (you can stick the barcode onto the back of the card, to stop it make it easier to remove from PCDash), insert the card into PCDash and scan it. Details on scanning cards are in the main manual for PCDash.

PCDash can also be configured through the user interface. By using the interface to configure PCDash no barcode scanning is required, this is a useful option if you are having trouble scanning that certain sheet. To configure PCDash through the command centre press the Gameplay button, situated above the barcode display. This sends the barcode information straight to PCDash.

In order to increase the graphical nature of your PCDash card, it is possible to assign an image as a background for the card, the next section describes this process.

ASSIGNING AN IMAGE AS A BACKDROP

Open the "Overlay" tab on the user interface. In the backdrop section, click the Set... button. A standard Windows file open dialog box appears. Select an image to use for the background and click OK. The PCDash window will now update, showing the background image.

Three types of image file can be used as a background image:

BMP – Standard Windows bitmap

JPEG – A common file format, generally associated with the Internet

WMF – A format normally associated with clipart images for word processor packages.