

The Ten TA Commandments

1. Don't Lose Your Commander

The Commander is powerful, but not invincible. In the thick of things, it's easy to lose track of where the Commander is located. Press Command-C to immediately center the screen on the Commander at any point in the game. Early on, use the Commander aggressively to set up resource generators. He'll also have to use his Disintegrator Gun more than once when your budding base is seriously threatened by an enemy attack. be cautious with the Commander once a game is well under way. If the enemy is in command of the skies, try hiding the Commander under water or in a nearby forest for safe keeping.

2. Know Yourself, Know Your Enemy

Total Annihilation features more than 150 units and structures. You should make a point of learning to recognize types of units instantly, and memorizing their special qualities. Otherwise, you'll have a hard time building an army that features the proper mix of units and organizing them well.

3. Expand to Conquer

Building a defensive base with tightly clustered structures doesn't lead to victory in Total Annihilation. Expand! Expansion means access to more metal and geothermal energy resources, the key to further growth. In the short term, strategy based primarily on creating an unassailable base brings peace of mind. In the long run, however, you'll give up a lot of ground to a hungry and aggressive enemy.

4. Choose Terrain Wisely

Total Annihilation brings a new real-time 3D environment to life that affects game play in a variety of ways. Mountains, rivers, lava pits, oceans and forests offer you opportunities to use the terrain to your advantage when establishing bases, planning ambushes and attacking enemy bases.

5. Scout Early and Often

Locating enemy forces and finding out what they're up to is always a top priority. You should fine-tune your strategy only after you've obtained enough intelligence! Send out scout units quickly to locate and possibly harass your adversary. Set up Radar Towers within the first few minutes of every game -- they really help keep tabs on who's where.

6. Don't Let Your Guys Fight Alone

A single unit can't accomplish much in combat. Don't waste troops by sending them out one by one in a thin trickle; form combat squads. For example, small squads that mix infantry, artillery and missile launchers are effective raiders in relatively open terrain. Naval task groups are always more effective if they feature a mix of submarines, destroyers, cruisers and battleships.

7. Repair and Recover

The Commander has the ability to repair damaged units and structures and also to recover usable metal

from wrecks and energy from trees and foliage. These abilities are crucial to your victory in a number of missions.

8. Beware Friendly Fire

Friendly fire -- killing your own troops by accident or through poor management -- is a real problem in Total Annihilation. In close combat, the Commander's Disintegrator Gun can blow up your own troops that happen to be next to the target. When using artillery, aim your fire away from your units that are engaging the enemy in close combat.

9. Focus Your Firepower

En masse or in squads, your troops should always concentrate their fire on selected targets to maximize damage to the enemy. Destroy your targets one after another by ordering an entire group of troops, ships or aircraft to fire at the same target. This tactic can knock out well-armored laser towers, construction plants and heavy tanks in record time.

10. Use Combined Land, Sea and Air Forces

It takes time and lots of resources to build up combined forces, but the whole entity is worth more than just the sum of its parts. Land forces occupy territory for you, and provide control of resources. Air and sea forces support and extend the ability of land forces to capture territory and defeat the enemy.