

Critters vs. Predators Game Manual

Everything you need to lead the smallest animals in the garden against the foxes, snakes, hawks and barn cats that hunt them. Early Access edition.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Getting started | 10. The PvP arena |
| 2. The hub | 11. Events |
| 3. Energy | 12. Guilds |
| 4. Your squad | 13. Raids |
| 5. Battle | 14. Your online account |
| 6. The campaign | 15. The demo |
| 7. Growing your critters | 16. Controls |
| 8. Daily rewards | 17. Help and support |
| 9. The Colosseum | |

1. Getting started

Critters vs. Predators is a collection RPG with auto-battles. You gather a squad of tiny garden animals, level them up, gear them up and send them into fights against the predators of the farm. Fights can run by themselves or you can call every move. Nothing that makes a critter stronger is for sale: every critter, star and gear part is earned by playing.

Your first game starts with a short cutscene and the tutorial fight at the garden gate, with a borrowed squad and tips along the way. When it is over, Sergeant Bristle the hedgehog joins you for good and the hub opens.

Tip: the tutorial cannot be lost. If the gate falls, it simply plays again.

2. The hub

The hub is home. The big card in the middle is the campaign: the chapter, its ten nodes, and the PLAY and SIM buttons. Along the top bar you find your name and level, the mailbox envelope, settings, your gold and energy, and the INVENTORY and CHARACTERS buttons. Along the bottom sit the game modes.

Tile	What it is	Opens at
CAMPAIGN	The ten chapters of the critter campaign	the start
DAILY	The login calendar and today's quests	the start
PVP ARENA	Fight other players' defence squads	the start
COLOSSEUM	Twenty floors of hard predator squads, reset weekly	the start
EVENTS	Timed events that pay a featured critter's badges	player level 5
GUILD	Join a guild, chat, invite players	player level 10
RAIDS	Three-day guild raids with a shared prize pool	player level 10

Your **player level** is the level of your highest critter. A pulsing star on a tile means something is waiting for you there: a calendar day to claim, a guild invitation, an event stage, or a raid your critters can attack.

Click your portrait in the top bar to pick any owned critter as your icon. Click the + next to your energy to refill it.

3. Energy

Campaign nodes, Colosseum floors, events and arena attacks cost energy. It refills on its own, six points every four minutes, even while the game is closed, up to your maximum of

144.

Action	Energy
A campaign node, chapters 1-5 (play or SIM)	6, hard 8
A campaign node, chapters 6-8	8, hard 10
A campaign node, chapters 9-10	10, hard 12
An arena attack	8
An event stage	what the event says, usually 6 to 10
A raid attack	free

Running low? The + button next to your energy refills 120 points. The first refill is free; after that each one costs gold, and the price climbs with every refill. The price drops back to the free one 24 hours after your last refill, and every refill restarts that timer; there is no limit on how many you buy.

4. Your squad

Before most fights you pick a squad of up to five critters. The party you set is kept, in its order, for the next fight; you can also set it from a critter's page under CHARACTERS (ADD TO PARTY), where each card shows its party slot. The first two stand in the **front row** and take the predators' attention; the other three stand behind. Put your tanks up front. Click a critter to add it, click again to remove it. The SQUAD RATING next to the stages tells you how your squad compares with the toughest stage ahead: if it outrates it, you should win.

Classes

Class	What they do	Critters
Tank	Stand in front, soak hits, TAUNT the predators onto themselves	Sergeant Bristle (hedgehog), Shellby (turtle), Chip Timber (beaver)

Warrior	Steady damage up front	Captain Thistle (bunny), Private Pip (mouse)
Healer	Keep the squad standing	Nurse Pudding (hamster), Drummer Nibs (guinea pig), Sister Olive (dove)
Hunter	Ranged damage from the back row	Lily (frog), Hazel (squirrel)
Mage	Area attacks and tricks	Old Morel (toad), Echo (bat), Grimsby (rat)
Berserker	Big hits, big risks	Honk (goose), Sir Crowley (rooster)
Rogue	Poison, theft and dirty tricks	Shade (ferret), Stinky Pete (skunk)

Every critter has a basic attack, a special ability with a cooldown, a passive, and a **leader ability**. The critter's page under CHARACTERS lists all of them.

The leader

Any member of the party can lead, whatever slot they stand in: click a slot on the squad picker (click again to step down), or SET LEADER on the critter's page. The leader's ability helps the whole squad for the fight, such as Captain Thistle's Warren Rally (Burrowers gain Speed), Shellby's Slow and Steady (everyone gains Defense and Health) or Hazel's Hoarders (allies resist debuffs and battle rewards grow by a tenth). With no leader set, no ability runs.

5. Battle

A fight plays out one turn at a time: the fastest animals act most often. The bar under each unit is its Health; the small icons above it are its statuses.

Auto or manual

With **AUTO** on, your critters decide for themselves: they attack, defend when hurt, use abilities when ready, and tanks taunt when their taunt is down. Turn AUTO off and every

critter waits for you on its turn, with a timer bar. Choose before the bar runs out, or the move is chosen for you.

Button	What it does
ATTACK	The basic attack
DEFEND	Take half damage until the next turn and get a head start on it
TAUNT (tanks)	For two turns the predators must attack this critter
An ability	The special, when its cooldown shows READY

Targets and arrows

Click any predator to make it your squad's target: a **gold arrow** marks it and your critters go after it when they can. A **red arrow** marks the critter the predators are hunting. Predators go after whoever hurts them most, so a critter dealing big damage draws fire unless a tank taunts.

Speed, pause and fleeing

The 1X / 2X / 4X button (or the **1** **2** **3** keys) sets the speed. PAUSE (or **Space**) stops the clock. FLEE (or **Esc**) asks whether to run: fleeing counts as a loss and spent energy is not refunded.

Stages and knockouts

A campaign node has three stages. Your critters carry their Health, knockouts and cooldowns from one stage to the next, and the node is won when all three stages are. A knocked-out critter is back on its feet for the next fight.

SWALLOWED: a snake (Coil, and the snakes of the later chapters) can swallow a critter that is not a tank. The critter is out of the fight but not knocked out: it shows small and dim where it stood, tagged SWALLOWED. Hit the snake hard enough and it spits the critter out at half Health; a snake that falls lets everything go. Anything still swallowed when the predators win counts as knocked out.

SIM TICKETS: every SIM run spends one ticket on top of the energy, and pays half the XP, gold and gear parts of a fight by hand. Tickets come as rewards: every Colosseum floor won and every day of the login calendar pay them for sure (two a day, five on the weekly days, eight on the last), five of the daily quests pay them outright, and arena wins, event stages, raid prizes and the other quests have a 60% chance of one to five. They sit in your inventory.

PERFECT MATCH: win a node you played by hand with nobody in your squad knocked out, and the node pays double gold, double XP and double gear parts, with a chance of one to five SIM tickets: node 1 one time in ten, node 10 every time, and every node of chapter 10 every time. Badges stay the same.

6. The campaign

Ten chapters, ten nodes each, three stages a node, from the Barnyard out to the badger's sett. Each chapter faces one predator family. In chapters 1 to 5 the family has a young one and a grown-up; from chapter 6 the boss is a grown-up on both difficulties and its packs mix its kits with predators from earlier chapters, up to nine on the field at once, with node 9 fielding at least four a stage and node 10 at least five. Past the first three nodes of chapter 1 the grown-up predator ends every node, from node 6 its young one joins it, and node 10 is the boss: the young predator with its parent behind it on normal, the parent at full strength on hard.

Chapter	Predators	Boss (normal / hard)
1. The Barnyard	The barn cats	Smudge the kitten / Marmalade
2. The Garden	The foxes	Rusty the fox kit / Ember
3. The Wheat Field	The weasels	Wisp the weasel kit / Sable
4. The Tool Shed	The snakes	Noodle the hatchling / Coil

5. The Cornfield	The hawks	Squall the fledgling / Redtail
6. The Orchard	The raccoons, with barn cats	Mask the raccoon
7. The Meadow	The crows, with hawks	Corvus the crow
8. The Riverbank	The bears, with snakes and raccoons	Big Grizz the bear
9. The Night Forest	The owls, with crows and weasels	Lord Hoot the great horned owl
10. The Sett	The Honey Badger's bullied gang	The Honey Badger

What a node drops

Every node pays gold and XP, and gear parts of the tiers the node card shows: normal chapters drop tiers I to XI, hard chapters VI to XX (the hard late chapters climb a tier faster), so every tier has nodes that drop it. XP follows the level of the predators you beat: a fight pays the XP a critter of that level needs, divided by the fights that level takes (about 14 at the start, rising to 70 at level 50), so later chapters pay enormously more than chapter 1 and every level is a set number of fights. The boss node pays double. Some nodes also drop **badges** of the critter they introduce: the first time you complete one, the badges are guaranteed; after that they drop about one time in ten.

Unlocking critters

Clearing a node for the first time can bring a new critter to your side. The node card says who.

Critter	Found at	Critter	Found at
Captain Thistle	Chapter 1, node 1	Shellby	Chapter 3, node 9
Nurse Pudding	Chapter 1, node 2	Shade	Chapter 4, node 2
Lily	Chapter 1, node 4	Echo	Chapter 4, node 4
Private Pip	Chapter 1, node 5	Sir Crowley	Chapter 4, node 6

Drummer Nibs	Chapter 1, node 7	Chip Timber	Chapter 4, node 8
Sister Olive	Chapter 2, node 5	Hazel	Chapter 5, node 3
Old Morel	Chapter 3, node 3	Stinky Pete	Chapter 5, node 6
Honk	Chapter 3, node 6	Grimsby	Chapter 5, node 9

You can also unlock a critter without clearing its node: collect ten of its badges (from events, raids and badge drops), open its page under CHARACTERS and pay the unlock fee in gold. Eleven critters come only this way, with a hundred badges and a 100,000 gold fee: the young predators, Quill the hoglet and Tumble the bear cub from their raids, and Fang the wolf cub from the PvP arena. Every one of them has two abilities. **Smudge the kitten**, Rusty the fox kit, Wisp the weasel kit, Noodle the hatchling, Squall the fledgling, Bandit the raccoon kit, Caw the crow chick and Blink the owlet each have a raid whose prize pool carries their badges and nowhere else. A hundred badges unlock one at level 1 with one star, and each fights with its own kit, not the one it had as an enemy.

Hard mode

Clear all ten nodes of a chapter and its HARD version opens. Hard starts above the chapter's normal boss and climbs from there, every stage fields five predators, every node ends on the adult predator, the nodes pay double XP and more gold and parts, and the boss node is the adult at full strength.

SIM

A node you have won by hand with a PERFECT MATCH (nobody knocked out) can be SIMmed: pay the energy and take the rewards without playing the fight. SIM x5 does five at once, and the results screen lets you sim again. Normal sims pay no gold; hard sims do. The sim uses your current party: if its rating is below the node's toughest stage, the sim fails, the energy is spent, and SIM closes on that node until you win it by hand again with a PERFECT MATCH.

7. Growing your critters

Open CHARACTERS and click a critter for its page. There are three ways to make it stronger.

Levels

Critters earn XP from every fight. When the XP bar is full, LEVEL UP costs a little gold and the critter goes up a level; the XP a level needs climbs steadily, the classic MMO curve (about 400 at level 1, 7,600 at 10, 47,000 at 30 and 147,500 at 50), and fights pay in step with it. A squad of five playing together reaches level 50 in roughly 180 hours. Levels go up to 50; the predators of the later chapters climb higher than that, and stars and gear are how you keep up.

Stars

Every critter starts at one star and can reach five. Each star needs badges of that critter and gold: 10, 20, 40, 50 and then 100 badges. Five stars doubles a critter's stats compared with one. Badges beyond what five stars need can be converted to gold.

Gear

Each gear tier has six slots. Fill all six with the matching parts, then GEAR UP to the next tier for gold. Parts drop in the campaign (the node card shows the tiers), and a part you are missing can be found by clicking the empty slot: GO TO takes you to the node that drops it. Tiers run from I to X in Early Access. Spare parts can be sold from the INVENTORY, and some parts are crafted there from others with twine binders.

8. Daily rewards

The DAILY tile holds the login calendar and the quests. Claim one calendar day each day; the gifts grow through the month. Four quests refresh every day at midnight UTC and pay gold, energy or badges. Do not forget the free energy refill, the first one after 24 hours without a refill.

9. The Colosseum

Twenty floors of tough predator squads, each with its own modifier (more Health, frenzy, bigger packs). Clear them in order, once each; the floors reset every week. Floors 5, 10, 15 and 20 are milestones: a cleared milestone can be fought again, three tries a day, and winning it (or using the three) rests it for 24 hours. Old Red waits on floor 10 and Big Grizz the bear on floor 20. A floor's gold reward grows with its number, and entering costs half that gold up front: back out before the fight and the fee comes back.

10. The PvP arena

Set a **defence squad**: other players fight it while you are away. Then attack: each day you get five attacks against three opponents near your strength. Fights against real players' squads move your PvP rating. A win pays one to three of **Fang the wolf cub**'s badges, by the opponent's difficulty, plus gear parts; a hundred of his badges and the unlock fee make him yours. Arena fights are played the same way as any other, with targets, abilities and taunts. NEW OPPONENTS rolls three different squads at no cost. LEADERBOARD opens the server's ranking of every player by PvP rating: scroll through the ranks, press FIND ME to jump to your own place, and click any player to see their defence squad, ratings and record.

11. Events

From player level 5, a new event runs every few days. Each event features one critter and its stages pay that critter's badges and gold. Stages are played in order and cost energy only. A stage's reward is guaranteed on its first clear; after that, playing or SIMming it again drops one to three of the critter's badges one time in twenty. NEW EVENT rolls an event of your own for 10,000 gold: it opens beside the current ones for three days, with its own featured critter and rewards, and only you see it. You can hold three of your own at a time.

12. Guilds

From player level 10 you can join or start a guild of up to 30 players. Guilds are **open** (anyone joins), **apply** (an officer says yes) or **invite only**. The leader and the officers accept requests, invite players, remove members and mute chat; the leader writes the guild's description and a pinned notice. Guild chat is where you organise raids.

Joining a guild means accepting the **code of conduct**: no harassment, no hate, no spam, no cheating. Reports are reviewed, and an account that breaks the rules loses online play.

13. Raids

A raid is the whole guild against one enemy over three days. The leader or an officer starts it, and every member chips in with attacks. Every raid has ten stages at raid-sized Health, each bigger than the last. The first is **The Barn Cats**: littermates, Smudge and Marmalade, then Marmalade back again and again.

- The raids are a chain: the guild must clear one before the next opens. They climb from level 20 (critters of 15 and up) through 30 and 40 to the level-50 raids (45 and up), and the prize pool doubles with each step while the badges stay at 100. The last is the Honey Badger, nine predators to a stage.
- Attacks are free. Only critters of the raid's minimum level or more can take part. A stage can field up to nine predators; their Health bars scroll.
- The predators' Health is shared by the guild: whatever you take off stays off. A stage falls when every cat is down, and the next opens.
- Your critters keep their wounds between attacks. Health does not come back during the raid.
- A critter knocked out in a raid sits out the next 12 hours, then returns fresh. Fleeing a raid attack sometimes gets the squad out before the lockout.
- Every attack pays XP to every critter that fought: the stage's level sets it, and stage 10 pays a whole fight's worth, stage 1 a tenth. Raid attacks are always fought, never simmed.
- When the raid is cleared, its prize pool is split among everyone who attacked, in proportion to the damage they dealt, and mailed to each player: for the first raids, 100,000 gold (doubling up the chain to 800,000), 100 badges of the raid's young predator (Smudge for The Barn Cats, Rusty for The Fox Den, and so on for the weasels, snakes, hawks, raccoons, crows and owls) and 30 gear parts of tier VI and up (X for first place, IX for second and third, VIII down to tenth, VI and VII for the rest). The damage table on the RAIDS screen shows where you stand.
- After a cleared raid, its participants sit out that raid for a day. While you have damage in a running raid you cannot leave the guild.

14. Your online account

With Steam running, SETTINGS > SAVE DATA > ONLINE signs you in with your Steam account and keeps your save online, so it follows you and is safe. Online play also brings the mailbox (news and gifts from the studio), events, the PvP arena against real players, guilds and raids. OFFLINE keeps your save on this PC only.

The **mailbox** (the envelope in the top bar) holds letters from the studio and raid rewards. CLAIM takes a gift; letters can be deleted once read.

15. The demo

The free demo is the full game capped at level 20, with no gold energy refills, and without guilds, raids, events and online PvP. Its online account works just like the full game's: when you buy Critters vs. Predators, your demo save carries straight on.

16. Controls

Everything is played with the mouse. A few keys help in battle.

Key	What it does
123	Battle speed 1x, 2x, 4x
Space	Pause and resume a battle
Esc	Flee a battle (asks first); on other screens, go back; on the hub, asks whether to quit
Enter	Send a guild chat message; answer yes to a question

17. Help and support

The HELP pages in SETTINGS repeat the basics. Found a bug? SETTINGS has a REPORT A BUG button that sends the report straight to us, and the [community forum](#) is where to talk about the game, ask questions and read update notes (posting takes a free account: your email and your Steam ID). The game is made by Lerk Interactive.

Critters vs. Predators © Lerk Interactive. Manual for the Early Access release; numbers such as costs and drop rates are tuned as the game grows and may change between updates.