

WHEN ALEX Didn't Do It

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

WHEN ALEX DIDN'T DO IT

Version 1.3.1

©2014 Stephen Nichol

Notice: It is the author's intention that the ZX Spectrum version of the game When Alex Didn't Do It be freely distributable with the stipulation that the author's copyright remains in effect. Recording and playback of play events is permitted.

Content: Sci-fi adventure with clean language, mild comedy, and some combat elements.

Any similarity to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.

SPECIAL THANKS: To Dizzykei - although we are strangers, he gave me lots of early feedback in the WoS forum about various bugs I had missed across all three parts of WADDI, which I have now fixed.

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01. INTRODUCTION

Following the previous night's party, you find yourself in familiar surroundings with some very unusual events taking place.

When Alex Didn't Do It is a traditional style text adventure with graphics.

For those who don't know already, the concept is not dissimilar to the adventure style paper books with multiple paths, in which making the correct decisions will lead to the conclusion of the story.

In order to progress through the game, words must be typed in, followed by return.

Near the beginning of the game the difficulty of the controls is easier and less commands must be used, for example items are added to your inventory automatically during puzzle solving, whereas later you must look for the items and pick them up with the GET/TAKE command.

02. LIST OF COMMANDS

This list of commands, accompanied by examples, can also be accessed at any time during the game by typing HELP followed by RETURN.



Please note: Unlike a compass, the direction indicator points to the direction you are facing and NOT consistently North.

<u>COMMAND</u>	<u>PERFORMS ACTION</u>	<u>QUICK COMMAND</u>
CLUE	In a few situations, there are clues available to aid in the completion of puzzles.	N/A
NORTH	Move North by one map location.	N
EAST	Move East by one map location.	E
SOUTH	Move South by one map location.	S
WEST	Move West by one map location.	W
UP	Move up one location	U
DOWN	Move down one location.	D
LOOK	Redescribe the current room. (useful following long lists of instructions, or the arrival of new objects, not yet described).	L
PUNCH	Combat only - punch an opponent.	N/A
EXAMINE	Describes objects of interest. Example: EXAMINE BOOK.	X, EX, or EXAM
GET	Adds a specified object to player inventory. Example: GET KEY.	N/A
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DROP	Removes a specified object from the player inventory. Example: DROP KEY.	N/A
GIVE	Give an object in inventory to another character. Example: GIVE CLIVE MEDAL.	N/A
USE	Use an available object (in inventory or room). Example: USE COMPUTER.	N/A
INVENTORY	Lists the items in your inventory.	INV
STATS	Displays your score, turns, money acquired etc.	N/A
KICK	Combat only - kick an opponent.	N/A
DODGE	Combat only - dodge an opponent's attack.	N/A
WORDS	If you don't like my attempts at graphics, or you just prefer text only adventures, you can use this command to turn off the images.	N/A
PICTURES	(Re)activates the in-game images.	N/A
QUIT	Ends the current game.	N/A
SAVE	Save your position to real or emulated tape.	N/A
LOAD	Load a saved game from real or emulated tape	N/A
6		

Chaining Commands

Games created with the GAC can accept multiple commands in a chain, as long as they are separated by the word then, for example:

Go North THEN Go East THEN Examine shoes THEN get shoes.

03. CONTROLS - PHYSICAL ZX SPECTRUM

In addition to the usual QWERTY etc. letter keys, the following keys are used in WHEN ALEX DOESN'T DO IT.

Left bracket (Symbol shift + 8
Right bracket)	Symbol shift + 9
Move Cursor Left	Caps Shift + 5 (On a 48K Rubber Keys) or Left Arrow (On a 48k+ or 128k/+2/+3)
Move Cursor Right	Caps Shift + 8 (On a 48k Rubber Keys) or Right Arrow (On a 48k+ or 128k/+2/+3)
Delete Text	Caps Shift + 0 (On a 48k Rubber Keys) or Delete (On a 48k+ or 128k/+2/+3)
Enter	Used at the end of each text command.

04. CONTROLS - IN EMULATOR

There are some minor differences to keyboard control when running this game in an emulator.

These differences are:

IBM Compatible running Windows

Left bracket (Shift + 8 not Shift + 9 as on IBM key.
Right bracket)	Shift + 9 not Shift + 0 as on IBM key.
Delete text	Ctrl + 0

Android (e.g. Spectaculator, Marvin)

For emulators that offer keyboard control, the controls are the same as on an original, rubber keyed ZX Spectrum (see 5. The Physical ZX Spectrum Keyboard, above).

Sticky-keys options available in the preferences menu of various emulators can make 2-key operation (for example, Symbol Shift + 8 to type a left bracket) easier, if required.

05. AN UNOFFICIAL HISTORY OF GAC

The Graphic Adventure Creator was originally released for the Amstrad CPC 464 in 1985. It was later ported to the ZX Spectrum (by Brendan Kelly) and various other computer systems available in the 1980s, including the C64 and BBC Micro.

At the time of the Graphic Adventure Creator's release on the ZX Spectrum in 1986, a competition was held to find the most well designed graphic adventure made using the software. The entrants games were to be judged by "Tony Bridge, adventure game specialist and journalist" (*from the competition flyer, World of Spectrum*) and the closing date was 30th November 1986. The winning prize was a publishing contract with Incentive Software, and the winner was Peter Torrance with 'The Legend of Apache Gold', which retailed for £7.95. The game also appeared on the covertape of UK magazine Crash, Issue 73 (Crash Presents #9) in 1990.

06. A WAFFLE FROM THE AUTHOR

Hello reader,

As a recipient of a ZX Spectrum 48k + in March 1992, I was not - perhaps - introduced to the Sinclair computer at the best time. This occurred because my first system was an Atari console - the VCS, retroactively known by the same name as it's plastic twin, the Atari 2600.

Being a ZX Spectrum owner out of time was an experience not without it's mockery in the schoolyard but, luckily some of my friends had up to date computers - one even had his old +2, relegated to a box on a shelf, and used to get out the old speccy so he could share his gaming expertise with me.

I often thought about writing my own software with my 48k +, especially after someone kind, let me borrow a stack of programming magazines, but the general opinion of the Nintendo and SEGA owning kids in the playground was "Who would play it?"

It's now 2014, and I've discovered that there actually are people who still make software for the Spectrum and other retro plaforms, and lots of them. Having some spare time due to a lifelong health condition that went undiscovered until I was in my thirties, I decided to finally have a go at making my own game.

Due to this being a multiload, it is the first game I started but, the second I am releasing - as it took longer to write, about 6 months during which Cap'n Rescue was also written to give me a bit of a rest when I was losing my sanity trying to get When Alex Didn't Do It finished.

I hope you enjoy playing it.

Stephen Nichol

12th December 2014

DISCLAIMER: The author of this game's associaton with the creator and sellers of GAC extends only to the ownership of a commercially available copy of the GAC game creation software. The author's comments are those of the author and in no way intended to represent those of Sean Ellis, or any Incentive Software personnel.

07. REALLY STUCK? SOME ADDITIONAL CLUES.

If the clues in the game are not helping, perhaps these riddles will.

PART ONE

- * If he caught the whiff of a friend, a way o-- he might lend.
- * You'll have to cut through if you want to venture s---- too.
- * To get him off the phone, try a different t---.
- * If the beach is closed, talk to someone who k----.
- * What he asks you to gather, the s-----s do matter.
- * In this shop to save, try selling the a-----.
- * After you buy, follow the instructions on the d--.
- * To distract the detective, the c--- of duty would be effective.

PART TWO

- * If with reaching down you can't cope, try using a r---.
- * In the house of the Master, make some noise with the p----.
- * Tool up a technical friend and some help he might lend.
- * When the bad guy you can't stop try using something in the s—p.

PART THREE

- * At this stage I'm not going to provide clues for Part Three,
as I don't want to take all the challenge out of the game.

08. TRIVIA

* Work on When Alex Didn't Do It was started on the 18th July 2014.

The first save was made on the 19th July 2014 at 1:03am.

* Testing of the first load took place over 10 days, with the final version being completed on the 26th September at 8:59am (until some changes were made in December 2014).

* An early version of the game had 75 rooms in the first load, this was reduced to increase the number of rooms with graphics.

* All of the rooms with graphics are made up of merge elements - carefully plotted lines, rectangles, and ellipses, which have been joined together to make areas that look slightly different. This minimises RAM usage.

* The ZX Spectrum version of GAC leaves 23194 bytes of RAM available to create your adventure in. The first load of When Alex Didn't Do It was completed with 65 bytes of available RAM remaining. Attempts at going lower than 65 bytes resulted in instabilities including objects, symbols, and words appearing that were not a part of this game.

* Initially load 2 of When Alex Didn't Do It contained the beginnings of a complex economy and healing system, including a somewhat

dubiously managed private healthcare system that saw the player kicked out of their hospital bed with only partial health if they were not carrying much money. The hospital was removed and player healing simplified in order to remove bugs in the game and increase the number of puzzles the player had to solve.

09. PRE-RELEASE TEST RESULTS

Load Tests WADDI Part One

26/9/2014

Loading To Start + Few Minutes Play

(In Emulator)

SINCLAIR MODELS

16k Rubber Keys – Not Applicable.

48k Rubber Keys - Okay.

48k + QL Style - Okay.

128k Toastrack - Tape Loader = Okay, 48k Mode = Okay.

AMSTRAD MODELS

128k +2 Grey - Tape Loader = Okay, 48k Mode = Okay.

128k +2A Black - Tape Loader = Okay, 48k Mode = Okay.

128K +2B Black - No Emulator Support (Considered +3 w/tape drive).

128K +3 W/Disk - Loader (Tape/Disk?) = Okay, 48k = Okay.

MILES GORDON TECHNOLOGY COMPUTERS

SAM Coupè - TO BE TESTED.

SAM Elite

- TO BE TESTED

CLONES

(In Emulator)

+3e - Loader = Okay, 48k Mode = Okay.

Pentagon 128 - Loader = Okay, 48k Mode = Okay.

Load and complete playthrough (In emulator)

01/01/2015

All parts One, Two, and Three

loaded as .tap into emulator in + 48k mode with
successful playthroughs.

06/01/2015

Part One and Two of version 1.1 complete playthrough
on 48k mode emulation = okay.

18/01/2015

Various bugs removed following feedback from WoS forum member
Dizzykei. All three parts of WADDI have now been extensively tested.
Version 1.3.1 ready to go. Added new PDF Instruction Manual.

10. KNOWN ISSUES

As of 18th January 2015, the following issues are known to be present in the game When Alex Didn't Do It.

Part One - There is one known issue.

- a. In some rooms the decorative border has a vertical line of 1 pixel width in black ink, most probably due to the well known ZX Spectrum attribute clash problem.

Part Two - There are no known issues.

Part Three - One known issue.

- a. After using the signal gun to complete a puzzle, an unwanted message 'you need a -----' is displayed once and not again thereafter.

11. CHANGES IN VERSION 1.3.1

There are seven minor changes in this version when compared to Version 1.0.

- i. Since Version 1.1, Upper case 'X' or lower case 'x' can now be used to examine items (ex, exam, and examine also remain usable).
- ii. Since Version 1.1, a bug in Part Three, affecting the BLUE CONSOLE has been fixed.
- iii. Since Version 1.2, a bug in Part One, which displayed the end of game message in the South East of the game has been removed.
- iv. From Version 1.3, the amount of money the player can obtain at different stages in WADDI Part Two has been altered, in order that the player cannot become stuck with the wrong items.
- v. From Version 1.3, there have been slight graphical changes in the Southwest of the

map, where the player meets the c-----, including a direction arrow being changed from East to West.

- vi. Version 1.3.1 removes an incorrect text message when the command STATS is used.
- vii. Version 1.3.1 a bug whereby the grapple rope appears but is unusable has been fixed.

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