

Keyboard Commands

SPACE FLIGHT CONTROLS

Anticlockwise roll	< - or joystick
Clockwise roll	> - or joystick
Dive	S - or joystick
Climb	X - or joystick
Increase speed	Space Bar
Decrease speed	/

Front view	F1
Rear view	F3
Left view	F5
Right view	F7

SPACE COMBAT CONTROLS

Fire laser	A - or fire
Target missile	T
Fire missile	M
Unarm missile	U
ECM	E
Energy bomb	C= (CBM key)
Escape capsule	<- (Back arrow)
Docking computer ON	C
Docking computer OFF	P

NAVIGATION CONTROLS

Hyperspace	H
Local jump	J
Galactic hyperspace	Ctrl+H
Distance to system	D
Cursor cross home	O
Cursor cross control	Cursor keys
Galactic chart	4
Short range chart	5

TRADING CONTROLS

Launch from station	F1 - docked only
Buy cargo	1 - docked only
Sell cargo	2 - docked only
Equip ship	3 - docked only
Galactic chart	4
Short range chart	5
Data on system	6
Market prices	7
Status page	8
Inventory	9

GAME CONTROLS

Enable joystick	Fire button
Disable joystick	INST/DEL
Restart game	Shift + CLR/HOME
Initiate save	@ - docked only



Comparison of different 8-bit versions of Elite

	BBC Cassette	BBC Disc	Acorn Electron	C-64	Apple II	BBC Master	NES	VIC 20 Unofficial
Release year	1984	1984	1984	1985	1986	1986	1991	2025
Ship types	13	31	11	33	32	33	33	30
Thargoids, Thargons	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dodo space station	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cougar	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Rock hermits	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Distinct ship designs	12	29	10	30	29	30	30	27
Max. ships in the local bubble	10	10	10	8	6	10	6	8
Enhanced AI and spawning	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Colors in the space view	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2
Colors in the dashboard	4	4	2	16	6	8	8	2
Dot height in the 3D scanner	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1-2*
Space view height	192	192	192	144	136	192	157	144
Space view width	256	256	256	260	259	256	256	130
Mining lasers and asteroid mining	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Military lasers	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Crosshair design varies with laser type	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Proper docking computer	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sun, fuel scooping, cabin temp.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Planet meridians and craters	Yes	Yes	No	Option	No	Yes	Yes	No
Extended text tokens	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Extended system descriptions	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
"Press Fire or Space" ship	Mamba	Krait	Mamba	Adder	Sidewinder	Cougar	n/a	Thargoid**
Search for systems by name	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Buy/sell specific amounts of cargo	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fractional kill counts	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sound effects	Standard	Standard	Basic	Enhanced	Basic	Enhanced	Enhanced	Enhanced
Logarithm-based maths routines	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Witchspace	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Explosion particles per vertex	15	15	7	7	7	7	7	7
Stardust particles	18	18	10	12	12	20	20	12
Joystick support	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	n/a	Yes
CPU	6502	6502	SY6502A	6510	6502	65SC12	2A03/2A07	6502
CPU speed (PAL)	2 MHz	2 MHz	1-2 MHz	0.985 MHz	n/a	2 MHz	1.66 MHz	1.108 MHz
CPU speed (NTSC)	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.023 MHz	1.023 MHz	n/a	1.79 MHz	1.023 MHz
Total size of all binaries (bytes)	26,138	48,442	24,064	53,194	47,056	45,337	131,088	38,463

* Low mass objects (asteroids, cargo canisters, etc.) appear with 1-pixel pins, and ships with 2-pixel pins on the black&white 3D scanner on VIC 20

** Second title screens shows Thargoid, and you can also browse through all the ships by pressing <- Back arrow key

Emulator Notes

VIC 20 Elite is best experienced on the real hardware. It should also run perfectly fine on most emulators, but you may have trouble finding some of the command keys.

For example, VICE 3.8 xvic on macOS with Finnish keyboard:

VIC 20	Function	Laptop keyboard	Extended keyboard
<- (Back arrow)	Escape pod, browse ships	fn+Cursor right	Page End
Shift + CLR/HOME	Restart game	fn+Shift+Cursor left	Shift+Page Top
/ or ?	Decrease speed	Shift+7 (Finnish)	Shift+7 (Finnish)
@	Initiate save	Option+2 (Finnish)	Option+2 (Finnish)
F1 - F7	Launch, Front/Rear/L/R view	fn+F1-F7	fn+F1-F7
C= (CBM key)	Energy bomb	Tab	Tab

These may also depend on keymap mode (Symbolic or Positional), and Host keyboard layout in Settings->Input Devices->Keyboard. Try testing the keys at the BASIC prompt before loading Elite if you have any problems finding all of them on your setup.

Retro Games The VIC 20 Console Configuration

Add the following tags to the D64 image filename:

_MVB0B1B2B3B5	VIC 20 with all RAM blocks (required)
AD	Accurate disk mode, so you can enjoy the loading picture a bit longer (optional)
TP	Set PAL mode, 10% faster CPU (optional)

VIC 20 photo by Damir Perec

Elite logo from archive.org, VIC 20 logo from Wikimedia Commons

More information about VIC 20 Elite:

<https://vic20elite.wordpress.com>