

<b>IMPORTANT NOTICE</b> <b>THIS EPISODE IS NEITHER MADE BY NOR SUPPORTED BY 3D REALMS</b>	
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Filename:	<b>THE_CONUNDRUM.GRP</b>
Date released:	<b>2022-01-16</b>
Other released maps by me:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Small parts in Community Build Projects 3</b> (2003), <b>4</b> (2003) and <b>6</b> (2004),</li> <li>• <b>Alex City 1: Bank Heist</b> (2003),</li> <li>• <b>Back in Business episode</b> (2020): <a href="https://www.moddb.com/mods/back-in-business">https://www.moddb.com/mods/back-in-business</a></li> <li>• <b>Submachine</b> (2021): <a href="https://www.moddb.com/mods/submachine">https://www.moddb.com/mods/submachine</a></li> </ul>
Misc. author info:	Civil/wind engineer and researcher from Poland. This is a short episode consisting of 6 levels (with 1 extra level for intro) that was made between August 2021 and January 2022. Please contact me if you have any comments or feedback regarding the episode, I am always very happy to hear it!
Additional credits to:	Beta-testers: <b>Aymeric Nocus (MRCK/ck3D)</b> , <b>JAC</b> , <b>Maarten</b> and <b>Merlijn van Oostrum, Ninety-Six</b> ; High Treason for the music used for end of level stats (and of course for the idea to use target-shooter logic in Build!); EDuke32 developers for making our lives a lot more convenient; Duke 3D modding community and people who still play this game and keep on making user content after 25 years.
Direct inspirations for the idea behind this episode:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Naked Dash</i> map by Mister Sinister;</li> <li>• <i>Duke VR</i> mod by FakirBaba;</li> <li>• <i>Glitches in the System</i> map by King Mamba.</li> </ul>
Other acknowledgements:	I'd also like to thank other mappers who had a strong influence on my style over the years (besides my beta-testers, whose impact was also very strong!), mostly: Pascal Rouaud, Billy Boy, Alejandro Glavic, Kevin Cools, Bob Averill, William Gee, Luciano Gallo (Gambini), Mister Sinister, Ryan Rose (Quakis), Mikko Sandt.

INSTALLATION AND COMPATIBILITY INFORMATION	
This episode was designed for <b>EDuke32</b> – download it at: <a href="https://www.eduke32.com/">https://www.eduke32.com/</a>	
Designed and tested on EDuke32 versions:	<b>r9382</b> (2021-06-05) – <b>r9597</b> (2021-08-30) Version <b>r9597</b> , included within the download, is recommended for playing this episode.
Recommended renderer:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This episode was designed primarily for <b>Polymost</b> renderer, which is the recommended way to play it;</li> <li>• The levels should be compatible with Classic 8-bit renderer too, as not everyone can run Polymost, but will not look as good with Classic (mostly due to unintended sprites glitching);</li> <li>• Polymer was never considered and is not supported.</li> </ul>
Recommended screen resolutions/ FOV setting:	Screen resolutions between <b>1024x768</b> to <b>1920x1080</b> . This only really affects the viewscreens. The levels were designed with default FOV (field of view) setting of <b>90</b> and it is highly recommended not to change it. Decreasing this setting may result in parts of viewscreen messages being impossible to read, while increasing it may cause visual glitches.
HRP or 3D models compatibility:	<b>Not supported.</b> Might cause visual glitches within the maps.
External gameplay mods compatibility:	<b>Not supported.</b> Most certainly will cause serious gameplay and progression problems which will basically render playing this episode absolutely pointless. Each level is very sensitive even on the EDuke32 revision used, leave alone any external modifications.
Voxels compatibility:	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The supported voxel pack can be downloaded from NightFright's GitHub: <a href="https://github.com/NightFright2k19/duke3d_voxelpack">https://github.com/NightFright2k19/duke3d_voxelpack</a></p> <p>However, keep in mind that the maps were primarily designed without voxels in mind, so there might be some minor visual glitches while playing with the voxels. Also for better framerate/performance, it is advised to play without voxels.</p>

**For a detailed, step-by-step instruction on how to install and run this episode, please refer to the file *INSTALLATION.PDF*.**

Play Information	
Episode and level:	7 new levels.
Single player:	Yes – designed for it.
Cooperative 2-8 players:	Not implemented.
Dukematch 2-8 players:	Not implemented.
Difficulty settings:	Yes. There are 3 difficulty settings to choose from, which will have a significant impact on your experience – however they have little to do with monster count and more with direct changes in the puzzles or their difficulty. Read more on this below.
New sounds:	<p>Yes, a lot of new Duke lines from <i>Duke Nukem Manhattan Project</i>. All of the new Duke lines were downloaded from <a href="https://www.101soundboards.com/boards/11219-duke-nukem-manhattan-project-sounds">https://www.101soundboards.com/boards/11219-duke-nukem-manhattan-project-sounds</a></p> <p>There is also new music for the end of level stats screen, which technically counts as “sound”. It is <b>Neverend</b> by <b>Robert Prince</b> (originally from <i>Duke Nukem II</i>).</p>
New music:	<p>Yes, all of the music used in this episode comes from <i>Duke Nukem II</i> soundtrack and was composed by <b>Robert Prince</b>. The following tracks are used:</p> <p><b>Duke II</b> (main menu),  <b>Menu Song 2</b> (Intro level),  <b>He's Back</b> (level 1),  <b>Squeak/The Fans of Megadeth</b> (level 2)  <b>Be Gone</b> (level 3)  <b>Dukin'</b> (level 4)  <b>You Be Dead</b> (level 5)  <b>Kiss the Girls and Make Them Cry</b> (level 6)  <b>Fight!</b> (levels selected without continuity)  <b>Calm Before the Storm</b></p> <p>All the music was downloaded from Mirsoft Game Music Base:  <a href="http://www.mirsoft.info/gmb/music_info.php?id_ele=MTQyODE">http://www.mirsoft.info/gmb/music_info.php?id_ele=MTQyODE</a></p>
New graphics:	No.
New/changed CONs:	Yes, but probably nothing you will notice besides episode and level names.
Demos replaced:	None.



### COPYRIGHT / PERMISSIONS

- This episode is non-commercial and completely free. As such, it cannot be distributed commercially or as part of any commercial add-on.
- Authors MAY NOT use these levels as a base to build additional levels (unless it is for personal use of course). However, I encourage you to explore the maps in Mapster32 and break them into pieces for scientific/learning purposes!
- Please do not explicitly copy parts of these maps into your own levels – or at least ask me before you do, I can be easily reached via e-mail or on duke4.net forums/Discord.
- If you decide to use any sounds or music found here for your own levels, make sure you credit their respective authors/sources (if they can be traced).
- You MAY distribute this episode through any electronic medium, share it on your website or send it by e-mail as long as you include this ReadMe file, the contents of THE\_CONUNDRUM.ZIP and anything else that came with it intact with no modifications. If you share it on your website or make a YouTube playthrough video, please tell me, I'd love to see it!
- Music and sound files are creations of various artists, mentioned explicitly in the section above. They can be downloaded freely from the Internet from the provided links. Should the authors, performers or legal proprietors of these tracks or sound files not agree with my non-commercial use of them, please contact me and I will cooperate.

### Construction

Base:	7 new levels from scratch.
Build time:	Started working on it during August 2021, mostly as a side-project. The outlines/ideas of most of the levels were already done in September 2021, while the first beta version was sent for testing on 24th November 2021. Then I took a long break and only went on to fix/polish the episode starting January 2022.
Editors used:	Mapster32, Audacity.
Known bugs/problems:	None when using the recommended EDuke32 versions. In some other versions (both older and newer), there might be problems even resulting in preventing the level progression, but these are not issues with the maps. There should be no way of getting stuck or softlocked for the player without an alternative way out – although sometimes that means a mandatory suicide.
May not run with:	HRP/Polymer/3D models. Furthermore, the episode will not run properly under original DOS Duke Nukem 3D or other, not-supported ports. Just use the recommended version of EDuke32.  This episode is not compatible with other mods or custom DUKE3D.GRP files.



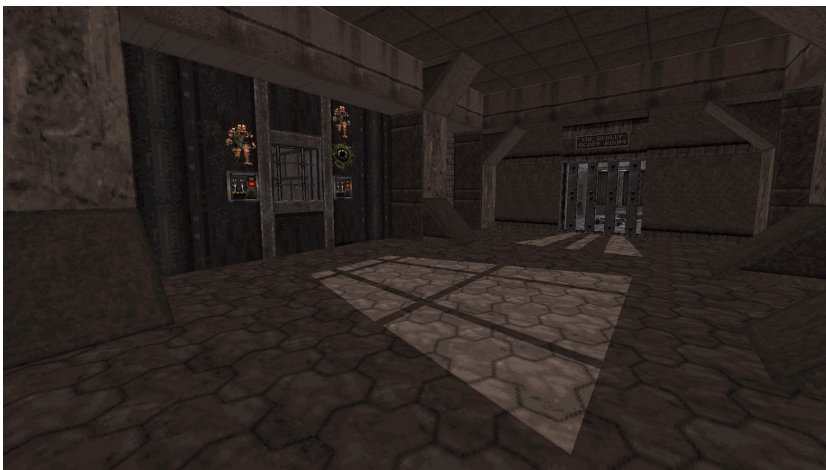


## Description:

This episode is strongly focused on solving puzzles and figuring out how to beat the maps, while also requiring typical gaming skills from the players. The level layouts are linear and not too complicated, the levels are short, usually consisting just of a few puzzles that require solving. However, the puzzles are designed to be difficult and challenging – it's a



sentiment directly taken from older PC games, where instead of elaborate, long plots, the players got less content, but challenging enough to keep them busy for long hours.



With that in mind, I've also decided to keep the design on a rather minimalistic level – the episode only uses a limited number of textures in beige and gray tones to keep the look somber and moody. Aside from architecture – which is based on a balance between function, 90s shooters classic level design principles and looking clean and interesting –

there are no extra decorations that would distract the player from their goal. All of the signs and buttons on the walls have some function, usually hinting players to their goals or activating something in the level. The episode also uses *Duke Nukem II* music.

That being said, I still had no intention of leaving the design plain and empty, as that would deteriorate the navigation and make all the levels blend into a single, indistinguishable pulp. Most of the detailing in the episode is achieved through combining and trimming of the textures and strong, contrast shadows – in fact, the abstract settings of the episode allowed



for some of the light sources to be placed specifically to create neat looking shadows.



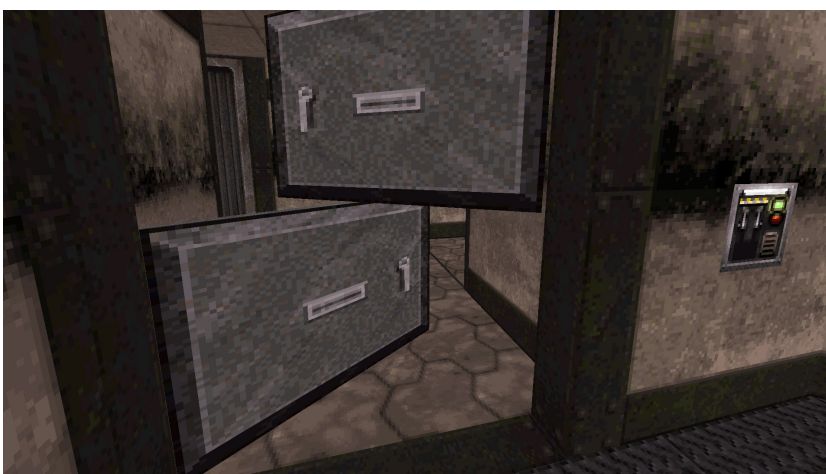
Another detail where I decided to go crazy are the doors. Build allows for a lot of complex door constructions and effects, and this time – not being restricted with the wall limit – I used most of the elaborate ideas in this department I've had. The abstract theme once again helps with fitting an over-the-top door into any location.

Some of these doors are variations of the effects I used in *Submachine*, they might also appear in levels from other authors, while some others are probably completely new, unique and original.

This episode offers 2 game modes available from the main menu: playing all of the levels in the intended order and with continuity between them (**The Conundrum**), or selecting one of the levels 1-5 and playing it as a “standalone” map, then returning back to main menu (**Try other level**). Please note that the final level is not available from the second



menu option and you have to obtain access to it by finishing all of the previous 5 levels through **The Conundrum** game mode!



There are **3 difficulty settings** to choose from, which will make the playing experience significantly different. The easiest one, **Hold My Hand**, adds some more health items in some of the levels, reduces the amount of enemies in the 4th level and most importantly – lets you see the detailed walkthroughs for each level on the viewscreens. Medium

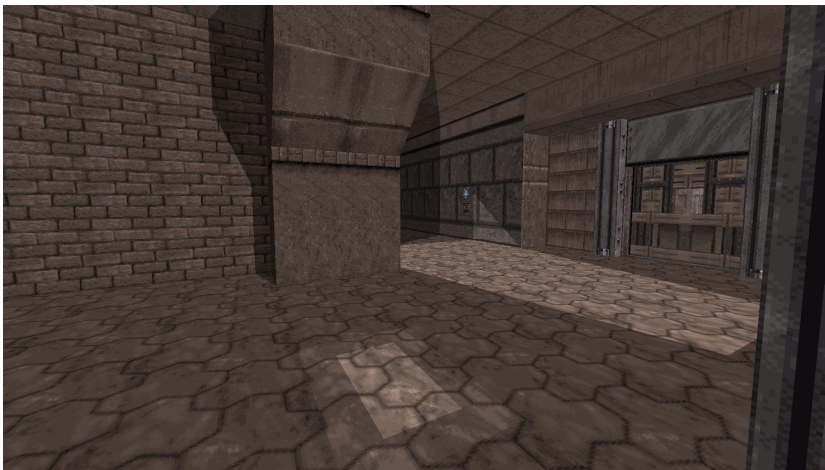
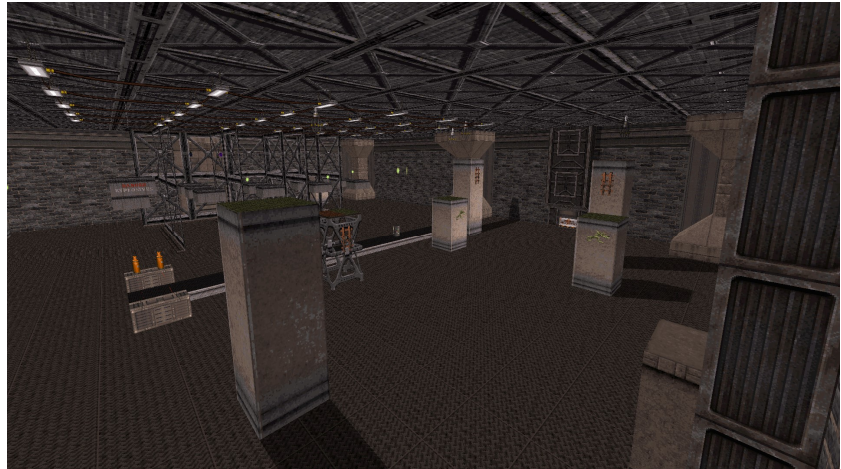
setting, **Give Me a Clue**, hides the walkthroughs, but lets you see the hints for each level. The toughest skill, **Too Much Free Time**, hides all hints (you can only see your destinations on viewscreens) and also makes some of the puzzles much more difficult (in levels 3 and 5, to be more specific). It is advised to start your first playthrough on **Give Me a Clue**.



## Levels:

### Ladders and Snakes

The first level is one of the longer maps in this episode and there is a lot happening to give you a proper warm-up and get you more accustomed to the logic of the whole episode and the kind of gameplay it offers. Make sure to check the hints at the beginning to get a clear idea of what you are supposed to do!

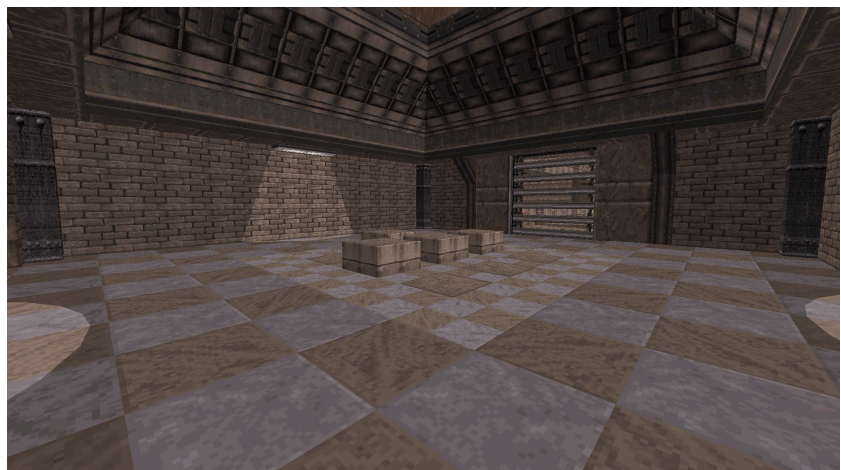


### Freeze!

In this level, Duke will have to keep it cool to survive the cold-blooded murderers lurking at him around every corner. We've all been used to Duke taking his enemies out loudly and packing heat, but this one is all about stealth. But perhaps not the *ninja* kind of stealth, more like *Jurassic Park* kind of stealth...

### Length Padding

What's everyone's favorite thing in Duke 3D? Button puzzles, of course! In this one, button puzzles are taken one step up for something more entertaining. The first puzzle is all about connecting the right dots, while the second one will engage your memory and cognitive skills as well as agility and fast decision making. The best approach to beat it might be perhaps a... different perspective?







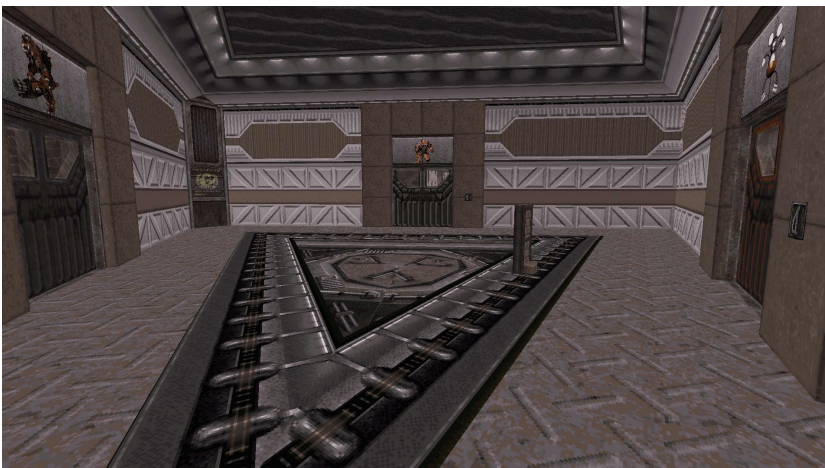
### Nobody Kills Our Chicks

As a true feminist, fighting the patriarchy since 1996, in this one your mission is to protect the women – unless they were already infected by aliens, then unfortunately the best thing you can do is a mercy killing. This map is packed with combat, but sometimes you will be required to take one for the team and act as a human

shield for your feeble and fragile female companions.

### Plot Twist

Now who would have expected this?! Boldly going to the final, Duke once again finds himself puzzled by all the fast rotating gears, spiral ventilation shafts and futuristic flying cars, ominously hovering over the lava. The lasers and rockets shooting at you might be one thing, but trying not to get a nausea is the real challenge here!



### Friend or Foe?

An epic story of friendship, rivalry and betrayal. In the final level, our heroic protagonist will find help from the least expected sources, only to end up stranded against the boss with nothing but his new friends to count on!... Yeah, we've all seen this story numerous times, right? This annoying, mischievous mouse

wandering around the level might give us a subtle hint as to which Hollywood studio is behind all this re-writing of well knowns stories and clichés...



### Gameplay hints:

- All the maps are very linear and straightforward – there are no secrets to be found.
- Always check the viewscreen at the beginning of each map.
- If you are stuck in a level, take a break – or better, try another level from the main menu!
- If you are *really* stuck, remember you can always view a very thorough walkthrough on the lowest difficulty setting – but also keep in mind it might take away some of the satisfaction from solving the puzzles yourself...
- If you binge-play the episode in one go, it might be a good idea to take a break before the 6th, final map – especially if you start to feel exhausted. The final map is by far the longest and most difficult within the episode, so it's most fun when played with a clear head and fresh mind.
- Save often, especially during your first playthrough – these maps are not very forgiving when it comes to mistakes.
- There are *really, absolutely* no secrets! Stop looking for them!
- ...or maybe there is one? It might have no purpose *yet*, but if you feel like taking on an extra challenge, try finding it!

### Technical information for nerds:

The table in this section summarizes the resources used for each level, for any OCD freaks out there who would be interested in this kind of stuff. The “effectors” column is a sum of all the effector sprites (tiles #1-#10) used in each map. Additionally, the final level uses 3 bunches for *True Room Over Room* structure.

Level name	Sectors	Walls	Sprites	Effectors
Intro	60	315	72	11
Ladders and Snakes	683	3757	3238	821
Freeze!	375	2068	1994	269
Length Padding	260	1430	1391	329
Nobody Kills Our Chicks	374	2417	2439	446
Plot Twist	188	1223	1222	247
Friend or Foe?	617	4297	3845	249

### Some more trivia (may include minor spoilers, read at your own discretion):

- Each level has a different theme, with the puzzles focused on a different kind of gameplay mechanic. None of the effects used for puzzles uses any new code – it's all been there inside Duke all the time (even though some of the features are only possible with EDuke32).
- I came up with the ideas for most of the puzzles and themes used within this episode during a single evening. Some of the ideas I've initially had were either impossible to



do or would end up being too awkward, so few more were incorporated on the go to fit the theme of the level they were applied in.

- The idea of having difficulty settings affect parameters other than the monster count within the level was first used by me in *Submachine* (and probably by some other people in their levels), though it was not applied to such an extent as can be seen here.
- The most difficult/time consuming puzzles to design/create in Mapster32 were the cranes at the beginning of the first map, the rocket and the mouse puzzles in the final map and surprisingly enough – the boss battle itself (due to how tedious working on that area was, with Mapster giving me a lot of problems while drawing new sectors there). Also the combat-heavy 4th level was quite painful to set up correctly due to the poor enemy AI and how random it might become.
- The puzzles I'm personally most satisfied with are the 2nd puzzles in "Length Padding", especially the difficult version of them available on "Too Much Free Time" difficulty – but most of my beta-testers found them too difficult, so I changed them a bit, drastically decreasing the difficulty on lower skills.
- On the other hand, the level I'm personally most satisfied with is the final level, which has the widest variety of puzzles and probably also the most original ones, while always keeping them consistent with the theme hinted in the level title. It's also my favorite level from the pack in terms of design. Needless to say, it also took the longest time to make it.
- Ideas for some of the puzzles (2nd puzzle in "Plot Twist" and 1st puzzle in "Length Padding" especially) were initially going to be used in the final level of *Back in Business*, which is yet to see the light of the day.
- Duke will have a lot to say – and usually not too pleasant things – when you suicide yourself after getting stuck to restart the level or if you try opening the door leading to the previous level...

## Story:

This episode is purely based on gameplay, with all the architecture solely made to serve the function and not really trying to be *realistic*, and with the abstract, bizarre theme of most puzzles and maps, any story would feel like pushing it. But if you really feel like you do need a story for your experience to feel complete, here's one:

Duke is struggling for money and audacity, since his ultra-macho, tough alpha overly-manly man image does not fit the current world and its standards. Therefore, he decides to compete in a new reality show – where he will not only need to prove his physical prowess as usual, but also his wit and logical thinking skills! ...It is unknown, however, who are the ladies who volunteered to be killed on the set, how did the producers get a hold of the aliens to play their part and most importantly, how Duke is revived each time after getting killed?!

File list – contents of THE_CONUNDRUM.GRP			
Levels			
Filename	Description	File size	Last modification
A1.MAP	Level 1: “Ladders and Snakes”	284 KB	2022-01-09
A2.MAP	Level 2: “Freeze!”	165 KB	2022-01-09
A3.MAP	Level 3: “Length Padding”	115 KB	2022-01-09
A4.MAP	Level 4: “Nobody Kills Our Chicks”	195 KB	2022-01-10
A5.MAP	Level 5: “Plot Twist”	99 KB	2022-01-10
A6.MAP	Level 6: “Friend or Foe?”	324 KB	2022-01-14
INTRO.MAP	Intro level	16 KB	2021-11-22
Music			
Filename	Description	File size	Last modification
BEGONEA.MID	Level 3 song: “Be Gone”	20 KB	2012-02-27
CALM.MID	“Calm Before the Storm”	3 KB	2014-03-13
DUKEIIA.MID	Main menu theme: “Duke II”	7 KB	2012-03-11
DUKINA.MID	Level 4 song: “Dukin”	16 KB	2012-02-19
FIGHTA.MID	Assorted levels song: “Fight!”	31 KB	2012-03-11
HESBACKA.MID	Level 1 song: “He’s Back”	22 KB	2013-09-22
KISGIRLA.MID	Level 6 song: “Kiss the Girls and Make Them Cry”	37 KB	2013-09-22
MENUSNG2.MID	Intro level song: “Menu Song 2”	2 KB	2013-09-12
SQUEAKA.MID	Level 2 song: “Squeak/The Fans of Megadeth”	23 KB	2013-09-12
UBDEADA.MID	Level 5 song: “You Be Dead”	13 KB	2013-09-12
Sound files			
Filename	Description	File size	Last modification
2ways.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	128 KB	2021-11-22
afrog.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	50 KB	2021-11-22
allday.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	61 KB	2021-11-22
amaze.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	77 KB	2022-01-09
babes.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	84 KB	2021-11-22
barrel.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	55 KB	2021-11-22
boxofammo.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	64 KB	2022-01-09
coldone.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	74 KB	2021-11-22
cruisesucks.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	55 KB	2021-11-22
end.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	45 KB	2021-11-22
goodday.ogg	Custom Duke’s line from DNMP	62 KB	2021-11-22
NEVREND.A.OGG	End of level song: “Neverend”	3 210 KB	2021-11-21



noback.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	50 KB	2021-11-22
nowhere.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	42 KB	2021-11-22
ohwell.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	28 KB	2021-11-22
ooops.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	53 KB	2021-11-22
original.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	40 KB	2021-11-22
pussy.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	38 KB	2021-11-22
refund.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	57 KB	2021-11-22
rip.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	53 KB	2021-11-22
sayhello.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	68 KB	2021-11-22
spoketoooon.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	47 KB	2021-11-22
surprise.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	53 KB	2021-11-22
time.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	60 KB	2021-11-22
wasting.ogg	Custom Duke's line from DNMP	50 KB	2021-11-22
Data			
Filename	Description	File size	Last modification
DEFS.CON	Definitions for sound and tile names, with new sounds added	37 KB	2022-01-12
GAME.CON	Main CON file, only slightly altered to get fix the warnings	148 KB	2021-07-07
USER.CON	User CON file, with basically all of the custom coding required for this episode	45 KB	2022-01-15
DUKE3D.DEF	Required for proper main menu display	1 KB	2022-01-12