

# Orion 4.00 User Guide

Date compiled: 03 June 1995



This is the Orion Help File. Click on a button below to go to a topic. You can search for a topic by clicking on the Search button above. Use the scroll bar to view any text not visible in a window.

- Playing the Game
- Playing to Win
- Viewing the Demo
- Registration
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- by post
- Credits

## Registration

ORION is distributed as shareware. This means that you are invited to try it out for 30 days to see if you like it. If you do, then please show your appreciation by registering. If you have registered this game then thank-you: your support is invaluable for the shareware industry. Only by registrations can Blue Light Productions continue to provide quality software for the market.

Registration costs:

By [Post](#):

£8 in UK currency,

\$15 in US currency or equivalent of US\$15 in another currency

By [CompuServe](#)

\$15 in US currency

For that you will receive a registration code in the post that you can enter by loading the 'REGISTER.EXE' file. This will unlock the extra [Features](#) in the game. Feel free to add any comments about the game.

You can register by [CompuServe](#) or by [Post](#).

Please quote Orion version number when ordering

Once you have registered you will receive the registration code by mail (not email) within 28 days, although you are likely to receive it well before then. It is our policy to try to dispatch all orders within 2 days.

See Also:     [Registration by CompuServe](#)  
                  [Registration by Post](#).

## Registering via CompuServe

Registration by CompuServe is very easy:



```
>>>> LOG ONTO COMPUSERVE IN THE NORMAL WAY
>>>> GO SWREG
>>>> FROM THE MENU SELECT THE REGISTRATION OPTION
>>>> ENTER THE ID 5781 FOR ORION
>>>> FROM HERE FOLLOW THE INFORMATION
```

Payment is simple; there is no fuss as you pay by credit card.

See Also: [Registration by Post.](#)

## Registering by Post



TO REGISTER BY POST USE THIS REGISTRATION FORM

If you do not have a printer, then you send your name, address, the Orion version number and a cheque or postal order for either:

- £8 (Pounds Sterling),
- \$15 (US Dollars) or
- The equivalent of £15 in another currency.

Print and complete this form, then send to:

Orion 4.00,  
Robin Reason,  
Lane Cottage,  
Blagrove Farm Lane,  
Caversham,  
Reading.  
ENGLAND  
RG4 7JX

CUT>-----

\_\_\_\_\_[v.4.00]  
\_REGISTRATION OF ORION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ POST CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

FEEL FREE TO ADD ANY COMMENTS!... \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

I enclose a  
 Cheque       postal order      Tick one

for:  
 £8 (pounds sterling),      Tick one  
 \$15 (US dollars),  
Or the equivalent of  
 Equivalent of \$15 (US dollars) in another currency

All cheques should be made payable to 'Robin Reason'  
I understand that this is shareware - I will receive the registration code and this is not to be distributed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

CUT>-----

Thank-you for registering Orion!

**See Also:**      [Registration by CompuServe](#)

## Full Features available to Registered Users

The latest version of Orion now has:

You will get:

- more play options,
- More stability (in fonts, etc.),
- More galaxies, including the ability to create you own,
- Faster play,
- larger grid,
- Up to four computer players,
- my support,
- information on new releases,
- No more annoying info pages on start-up,
- No nagging when you quit,
- A hard copy of manual

**See Also:**     [Registration by CompuServe](#)  
                  [Registration by Post.](#)

## Playing the game of ORION

- What is ORION
- Installing and running
- Configuration screen
- The Pieces
- Taking your Turn
- The scoring system

## What is Orion?



A strategy game based on a grid with aliens controlling cells. 2-4 players may play, and any of those may be computer players.

The game can be customised as to how you wish from the options when Orion is loaded.

The object is to dominate the board by capturing other aliens.

**See also:** [Loading the game](#)  
[Options \(configuration\)](#)  
[The pieces in Orion](#)  
[Taking your turn](#)  
[The scoring system](#)



## Installing and Running



Orion is supplied as a compressed file ORION400.EXE that you need to expand into a directory on your hard disk or another floppy disk.

Having done this, change to that directory and run the ORION.EXE file.

You will be welcomed and invited to select the way you wish the game to behave via the [Configuration](#) screen.

**See also:**     [Configuration](#) screen.  
                  [The pieces in Orion](#)  
                  [Taking your turn](#)  
                  [The scoring system](#)

## Setting the Game Options

ORION has an 'options' dialog box in which you can alter how you play Orion.

**Welcome to Orion! Just click OK for defaults.**

**Galaxy**  
 Custom  
 Virgo  
 Dwarf  
 NGC 6822  
 Andromedia

**Base (in corner)**  
 Lose if captured

**If enemy surrounded:**  
 Capture  
 Destroy

**Diagonals:**  
 Can move to  
 Can attack

**'surround` with:**  
 2 planets  
 3 planets

**Players**  
 Human OR  Computer  
 Human OR  Computer  
 Human  Computer  
 Human  Computer

Buttons: Cancel, OK, Default

Examples are shown with the defaults active. These are the options you can choose:-

**Galaxy**  
 Custom  
 Virgo  
 Dwarf  
 NGC 6822  
 Andromedia

This lets you decide what board you wish to play on. They differ in how the 'blocks' are positioned on the board. These blocks, stars, prevent the player from placing units in the cells that they occupy. If you select a custom galaxy then you after clicking the 'OK' button, you will be asked what grid size you wish to play on.

**Base (in corner)**  
 Lose if captured

If the 'Lose if captured' checkbox is checked then object of the game will be slightly different. You will be knocked out of the game if you are captured.

**If enemy surrounded:**

- Capture
- Destroy

This option lets you decide what happens to an enemy piece if you have surrounded it.

**Diagonals:**

- Can move to
- Can attack

Selecting 'Can move to' enables you to be able to move to the diagonals when adding aliens. The 'Can attack' checkbox controls whether the diagonals will be considered when surrounding the enemy.

**'surround' with:**

- 2 planets
- 3 planets

This option is to decide how many planets will count as 'surrounding'. See [Taking your Turn](#)

**Players**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human OR | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human OR            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Computer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human               | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human               | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer            |

Lets you decide what each player is controlled by. Each row contains a 'human' checkbox and a 'computer' checkbox. The first two rows, out of the four, must always be selected with either the human or computer player. Players three and four are optional.

Cancel

OK

Default

When you have finished your selections, click the OK button. To restore the default settings, click the

Default button. If you do not want to play (Uh!) click the Cancel button.

After you have clicked OK and you will be presented with the ORION playing [Pieces](#) on [The Playing Board](#).

**See Also:** [The game options \(configuration\)](#)  
[Registration](#)  
[Registration by Post.](#)  
[Registration by CompuServe](#)  
[The Playing Board.](#)  
[The pieces in \*Orion\*](#)  
[Taking your turn](#)  
[The scoring system](#)

## The Pieces you use to play ORION

There are four pieces that are used to play the game, one colour for each player.


They are:

Player 1:  with the base:




Player 2: 



Player 3: 



Player 4: 



The options affect whether the base will be there or not.

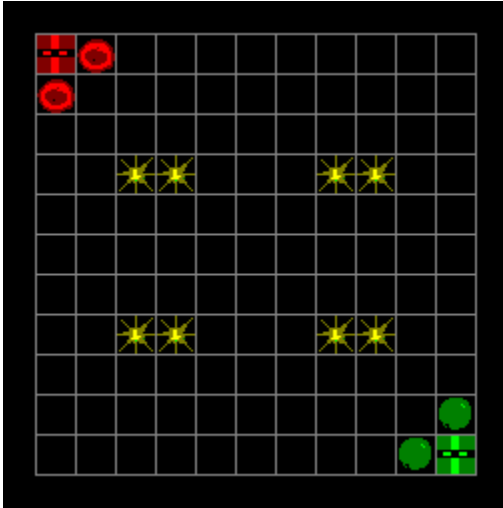
Dotted around the board are blockages: 

You will have to work around these. If you have the registered version of Orion, then you can customise your own galaxies, thus enabling you to position the stars in the game before you play.

**See Also:**     [The game options \(configuration\)](#)  
                  [Registration](#)  
                  [Registration by Post.](#)  
                  [Registration by CompuServe](#)  
                  [The playing Board.](#)

## The ORION Game Board

The game is played on a simple square celled board.



If all four players are 'in' then a base will be shown in each corner. The default is two. Each player starts with two pieces on the board. Some cells may be blocked.

The players take it in turn to play the game.

See Also: [Taking your turn](#)  
[The scoring system](#)

## Taking Your Turn

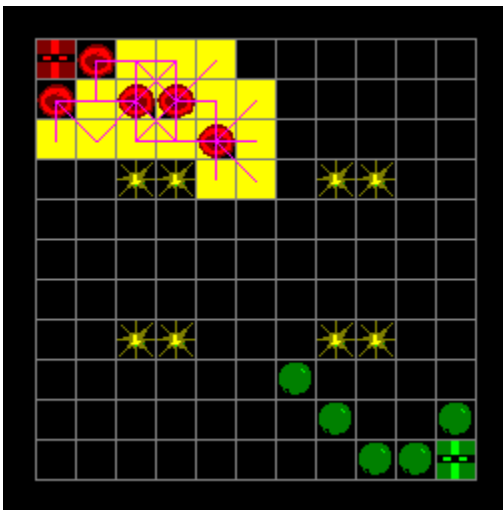
Your turn takes place in three stages.

First, you can remove some or all of your own pieces using the right mouse button.



The red player, as shown here, may place a piece in any of the cells shaded yellow in the picture.

Second, you place a piece next to one of your existing pieces using the left mouse button.



Last, if you have three of your pieces touching another player's piece, it becomes yours.



Then play passes onto the next player.

Playing the game is easy, and achieving a high will take practice, thought and skill.

See Also: [Playing to Win](#)  
[The Scoring system](#)  
[The Orion playing Board.](#)

## Playing to Win



As you play you will come across a number of cases where the simple play does not result in you winning.

Here are some of those situations with their result and a way of avoiding the consequences:

- ☀ Don't clump too many of your aliens together; they are vulnerable and can be destroyed easily: use the right mouse button to break up large groups of aliens.
- ☀ Think ahead: gaining 2 aliens may result in losing 20 in the next go.
- ☀ When playing with more than 2 players, form alliances - you can then combine forces to attack other players.

The more subtle tips for you to find out yourself!

See Also: [Taking your turn](#)  
[The scoring system](#)



## Keeping Score

Orion will keep score for each player. This is displayed next to the players icon. The high score is placed above the board, and the number of goes taken is in the top right of the screen. If a human player achieves a higher score than the high-score, then that player will be asked for his or her name. This will then replace the previous high-score.

The object of the game is to eliminate the opposition, and a large score will be awarded to players who knock out others. Most points will be awarded for destroying a computer player, but destroying a human player will still collect some points. The quicker a player destroys an opponent, the more points that player will be awarded.

A point is deducted for:

[Taking a turn](#)

Destroying Aliens,  
being Captured

However, points can be regained by:

capturing enemy aliens  
wiping out another player

Experiment with different strategies to gain high scores. The more players that you take on, the greater the possibilities for achieving high scores, but naturally the game will be harder.

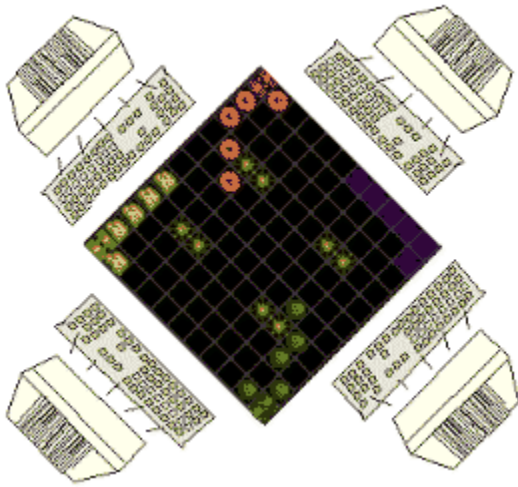
More points will be awarded for destroying enemy aliens, as oppose to capturing them; you will have to set this in the [options](#). If you have chosen to destroy knocking out other players from the game, but the process of doing so will give you more points.

See Also:

[Playing to Win](#)

[Taking your turn](#)

## Viewing the Demo



You can see how the game of Orion works in practice by selecting all the players to computer players.

## Credits



**Blue Light  
Productions**

would like to thank:-



David Liddament for his help in the artificial intelligence.



and Martin Donegan for general help in the field of programming.



Kevin Jory; who created this Help file. Without him, the game would have been left in disrepute, without proper guidance, and no real direction in how to play for all those budding Orioners out there.



And for the many, many thousands of beta tests:

Robin Pollock

Kevin Jory

(okay, okay, only two, but they did do a lot).



