

Checkers_au

COLLABORATORS

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REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

Checkers_au

1.1 This is the Guide to the Game of Checkers_au.

This is version 1.1 of the game, Checkers_au.

by Thomas F. Powell (Updated) 1st. Mar. 1997.

IMPORTANT. PLEASE READ 'New Update Page'.

This version of the game is Giftware, and was created with Amos1.36 on an Amiga 2000HD. It is workable for both Pal. and Ntsc. modes using Workbench 2.01+ and with 1 Meg+ of Ram. See (Installation).

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The Rules of the Game.

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1.2 update

Latest Update 1.1

After just recently reading an article in one of our Amiga magazines, it appears I may have broken a few AMINET rules when uploading

the original game, under the name 'Am_Checkers' version 1.0. Unfortunately in making amends I am forced to change the name of the game. To make matters worse, some copies have already been spread far and wide.

I now realize the full original name with the extension '.lha' was more than 20 characters long (hence the name change). Next, the short file was not correctly written (it is now), but mainly because I had two (2) Workbench files in my 'Archive' and this is strictly a NO, NO, (naughty, naughty). Because I felt this game needed speech and because I knew the Amiga 1200 was sometimes sold without the 'narrator.device' and the 'translator.lib', I had included them as an integral part of the program. Would you believe I didn't even put the project in the right directory.

Far be it for me to start an international incident, but it was also a little presumptuous of me in using 'American' in the title anyway. Here in Australia we often refer to the game by either its English name, 'Draughts' or the American name 'Checkers', and I'm not a 100% sure that the rules are the same. Over all I felt a change of name was called for. The '_au' is just a play on the 'Internet' address. Dare I mention here a much different game called 'Chinese Checkers'. NO, better not!

I must apologize to all interested parties for allowing this confusion.

This does of course mean to have speech you will need a copy of the:-

narrator.device. in your devs drawer and a copy of the:-
translator.lib. in the libs drawer.

I believe you can get these from any Public Domain Library.

So with the NEW name of 'Checkers_au', a NEW short readme, the two offending files removed and using the game/board drawer, do I go back to v1.0? I think NOT!

Checkers_au Version 1.1

and on with the show.....

No, I have NOT increased the computer's playing power as of this version. , I will need a little more time and 'STUDY' for this important process. However, I have added a bit more to the program, but at the same time have also taken a bit away from it. I have remove the two RULES buttons, you can now ONLY play to the Default rule settings. I have also cleaned up a couple of small bugs.

Bill Murray of Oregon, USA, found a 'Phantom playing piece' would suddenly appear under certain circumstances. This occurred if you happened to move a computer's man (by mistake, OR, on purpose), an 'illegal move' would be called and the man returned to its original square. Unfortunately I forgot to reset an array variable correctly. The pointer will now, NOT recognize a computer's man and you NOW cannot move a computer piece even if you try. Thank you for that information

Bill, I'm sure, we have seen the last of our ghostly friend.

Max Headroom (not too sure where Max is from, and I think Max wishes to stay incognito), felt the computer's moves were too slow. I have dropped the speed of the move variable, from 100 to 50, (which actually doubles the speed of movement). Also the centring of your man (once mouse button released), has been speeded up by updating the 'Statistics' area, after the move has been fully made and NOT during it (silly mistake). Game play speed can also be increased, if you turn off the 'Say Next Move' buttons, Max, and thank you for your comments.

My friend Helmut Reichert of Melbourne found a bug when he tried using the 'CONTINUE-MULTI JUMPS' button. Strange how these creepy little creatures slither into a persons program, (it worked perfectly well at one stage). I have certainly squashed this one as dead as a door nail, after further investigation and due thought, have removed the two extra rules buttons. The default play is now to (what I believe to be), the international rules. Helmut also came up with the suggestion of making Checkers_au a two player game. I thought why not, all I'd have to do is change the graphics a little and alter some variables around. It turned out to be a little more than that, but after about ten hours of hard work, you now have an extra 'Computer/Opponent' button to play with. See, 'Preferences'.

There were a few people who criticized the intellect of the computer's playing moves. I must admit the game was never intended to be played by any 'Grand Masters', mainly the younger set. However, I have accepted the challenge and am now force feeding the 'DF0:' slot, in my computer with multitude handfuls of fresh 'fish', hoping for some 'brain gain' by the next version.

Thanks to all who found time to try out and comment on my rendition of the game, of 'Checkers'.

1.3 introduction

A Short Introduction To Checkers_au.

I learned to play this game when I was only a small boy. I have named it 'Checkers_au', only to distinguish it from the English game 'Draughts' a version by Steve Hargreaves, (which I have already seen on the 'market'). Why the game is called 'Checkers' in one country and 'Draughts' in another I cannot say, the play and rules are the same, as far as I can find out. If anyone wishes to make a comment on the subject, I would only be to happy to hear from them.

I have another game on CD, called Naughts and Crosses, and have since found out there is also one with the same name around, should have called mine, 'Tic_Tac_Toe'. The American name for the same game.

Checkers_au is played on the same type board as Chess, but you only have two types of men, Pawns and Kings. It is what one might call, 'poor man's chess'. To give a game of logic like Checkers_au, the intelligence it deserves, is a big challenge, but have learned a bit

from writing 'Naughts and Crosses'. I am no artist, so not only do you get 'poor man's' chess, with 'poor man's intellect', you also get 'poor man's graphics', (as Maxwell Smart would say, 'sorry about that.').

I nearly scramble my brains, wear out my typing fingers (all two of them) and almost double my intake of nicotine, just so a computer can beat me at a game. I must be stupid!

But, it's FUN, programming computers, isn't it??

1.4 rules

The Rules as I know them.

(1). To Start, ALL Men are Pawns. The Computer or Opponent will use the pawns at the TOP of the board and move or jump DOWN the board. Your pawns are at the BOTTOM and move or jump UP the board. ALL pawns can only move in the one direction.

(2). To be Crowned a King, a Pawn must either move or jump onto a square in the last line at the opposite end of the board. Once becoming a King, he may now move or jump in any diagonal direction 'UP' or 'DOWN', the board.

(3). Both the Computer's/Opponent's and your Men use only the 'DARK' coloured Squares. ONLY Diagonal moves and jumps are made. The 'LIGHT' squares are illegal, should you try to use one of them, (or any other inappropriate spot), the computer will place your man back to its previous square and say, 'No move'.

(4). A jump consists of physically jumping over the oppositions pawn or king and landing in an empty square diagonally opposite. You cannot make two jumps in a row with TWO different men, BUT, you CAN make 'CONTINUOUS', jumps with the SAME man.

(5). If there is a jump that can be made, then you MUST make that jump. If you did not SEE the jump and move some other man, the computer will reverse your move and point out the man you MUST jump.

(6). Your Pawn can make more than one jump at a time, but only UP the board, if however, he becomes a King, he may continue jumping down the board if there are jumps already there to be make.

(7) Both Pawns and Kings only move ONE square at a time, UNLESS jumping and then only two squares.

(8). The game is over when You or the Opposition loses his last man or cannot make another move or jump.

A stalemate may sometimes happen with both you and the computer moving back and forth between two squares. Should this happen I suggest you call it a draw and click on 'Another Game'.

One other thing, should the computer at any time, start moving a man back and forth between the same two squares, when it is clearly able to make other moves. It is up to you to pursue and kill off its men and win the game. The computer is only marking time, waiting for you to make a mistake.

All is fair in love and war!

1.5 preferences

A Little on Preferences and Other Things.

On starting the game, a preference screen(s) will appear. You have a choice of having sound and/or background music and who will go FIRST (See below). You also can change the colour of the pawns, (I know the choice isn't great, but I only have 32 colours to play around with). Needless to say, you cannot have both opponents the same colour, when the red square becomes white the change has taken place. You can save these choices by clicking on the 'Save' button. This will save all preferences to a 'Pref_file', which is loaded upon starting up Checkers_au.

A NEW 'BUTTON' has been introduced with version 1.1. A 'Computer/Opponent' button, this allows you to play against either the computer or a friend. To clean things up a bit, I have moved 'YOU' to the LEFT hand side of the screen and the 'computer/opponent' to the RIGHT. YOU still use the LOWER pawns and the computer/opponent the UPPER pawns. When playing with a friend, you will have to share the MOUSE. The graphical changes have been minor, so anyone who has been using version 1.0, should not have any problems with this.

* FIRST * There are three (3) buttons on the 'Prefs' screen under the heading 'First Move', they are, 'You', 'Com/Opp' and 'Random'. If you click on 'Random', either you or the computer/opponent, will be the first to move. The initial default setting is 'RANDOM', but you can alter this at absolutely any time. After the FIRST time you move a man, these 'First Move' buttons are automatically reset to 'YOU', to reflect the TRUE turn position during the game. If you alter them during a game, you could give yourself or the computer more than one move in a row. This might be contrived as 'Cheating', and you could be heavily fined for such an act!

If for some reason you are interrupted somewhere through a game and would like to continue it later on, just click on the 'Save Game' button. If a 'Game_file' is not present it will be made for you. Then on starting Checkers_au next time, just click on 'Load Game' when the Pref. screen shows. The game will be set up exactly as you left it, even the length of the playing time. Saving a game will REPLACE the previously saved game.

A game can really only be saved with 'You to Start', but if you click on the 'com/opp to start' button before you 'Load Game', the computer/opponent will begin first. This means you could play the Finish of a game either way, as many time as you like.

You can see the Pref. screen at any time, by moving the pointer to the Top Right hand corner of the screen, over my name (who doesn't like their name in lights), a pref. button will appear, click on it to see preferences. To remove the pref. screen just click on 'Done'.

There are two (2) buttons, one on each side of the board that you may use to stop the computer saying 'who's turn' it is, they also stop it saying 'you have another jump' and 'you have a king'. These buttons are also saved with the 'Pref_file'. Even with these buttons 'OFF', you still have a VISUAL indication of who's turn it is.

The last two (2) other buttons, (QUIT and ANOTHER GAME), you can figure out for yourself.

Both the 'Pref_file' and the 'Game_file' are stored in the Checkers1.1 directory with all the other files.

The 'Statistics' section at the bottom of the playing screen just gives various bits of info that you can easily recognize. This section does NOT appear in the 'NTSC' version of the game, due to the structure of the NTSC Mode (only 200 lines seen on the Monitor, as opposed to 256 lines for the 'PAL' Mode).

One last thing, you make a Move or Jump by moving the Pointer over the man you wish to play, and while holding down the Left mouse button, moving it to the square of your choice, then letting go of the mouse button. I think doing it this way involves the player more into the game than other methods.

1.6 installing

How To Install This Game.

 Installing Checkers_au is as simple as simple, so have not bothered to write an installation program. All files come in a Directory (drawer), named Checkers1.1. The files that should be there are:

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Checkers_au.guide....The amigaguide you are now reading.
Checkers_au.....The game it-self.
Checkers_au.Readme...The On-line Short file.
Pref_file.....The 'your saved' preference file.
Game_file.....The 'Save a game' file.
a Pics Drawer.....Holding:-
    Checkers.pic.....The Main Board Screen picture.
    Pref1.pic.....The (top) Preference Screen picture.
    Pref2.pic.....The (bottom) " " " " .
a Fonts Drawer.....Holding:-
    two different fonts inside it.
```

A few files I know, but ALL of these files MUST be kept together inside the Checkers1.1 directory! So how do we install?

COPY the CHECKERS1.1 DIRECTORY to ANY HARD or FLOPPY DISK DEVICE:

You may put the 'Checkers1.1 Directory' in a Drawer, or, in a Drawer within a Drawer, as DEEP as you like.

I told you it was simple. Open the Checkers1.1 drawer, double click the Checkers_au icon, and you are away!

*** NOTES for the Amos Programmer ***

The Amiga 1200 model was sometimes sold without the:-

'Translator.lib' library installed in the 'Sys:Libs' drawer.

'Narrator.device' device " " " 'Sys:Devs' drawer.

to have speech you must have these files.

For the 2000HD machine, I could 'Spack' all the pictures and save them with the program (like I did the Bobs), before I compiled it. But have found out, Amos prefers to 'Load' the pictures as simple IFF files when used on an Amiga 1200 computer.

If for some reason the program will not run using its specified needs, get in touch with me, I'm sure we can work something out.

1.7 credits

We Must Have Credits

The Intro and background music are the same tune which I picked from my PD collection. Unfortunately I do not have the composers name but would like to thank him for his nice rendition. Seeing as the rest of the work is mine, I must take full responsibility for any Bugs that may appear, forthwith to be known as (Powellus Consilicus).

If you enjoy playing this game, and seeing as I think I may have done my brain some damage writing it, you might like to send me a 'Get Well' card.

As I am not on-line YET, please be patient to any received or transmitted replies. All electronic mail correspondence should go to my friend, Helmut Reichert of address:-

'helmutr@connexus.apana.org.au'

who's help I appreciate greatly.

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