



Presents



***Game Manual
Revision No. 3.1***



*This game is created with
DIV Games Studio*

Introduction

Description

Trick Blast is an arcade game for one or two players.

The aim of the game is quite easy, blast your own balls and hit a large green ball to make it roll towards the other side of the playfield. Beware that your balls explode after a couple of seconds and that you can only have a limited number of balls in play at the same time.

This game, best described as a mixture between pinball, pool and shooting, is released as freeware for you to enjoy!

(This game is submitted to the DIV Competition 2000.)

Features

- One or two player mode
- Six levels with increasing difficulty
- Three different playfields (steel arena, desert dome and ice stadium)
- Five difficulty AI settings for computer opponents
- Variable game settings, including time, ball and bonus amount

System requirements

Please note that this is the minimum system requirement for the game to run. As usual, the more computer power you have got, the better the game will run.

- Pentium compatible processor (200 MHz or higher)
- 16 MB of RAM (32 MB or more recommended)
- VESA compatible graphics card (capable of displaying 640x480 in 256 colors)
- Microsoft compatible mouse
- SoundBlaster or Gravis Ultrasound (and compatibles) optional for sound
- Runs in Windows 95/98/Me and MS-DOS

I have developed this game on an Intel P-III 600E with 128 MB RAM, a GeForce 256 DDR graphics card and a Sound Blaster Live sound card running Windows 98.

Menus

Main menu

This is the first menu you will see after the introduction and also the menu that you always return to when you have finished or exited the game.

Here you can choose which device (keyboard, mouse or computer) that controls each player. You select the **red cannon controller** on the left side of the screen and the **blue cannon controller** on the right side. Please note that two players can't have equal controllers (except the computer controlled cannons). Which means that if you for example try to select mouse for both players, the other controller (which is not selected) will be changed to another device (in this case, keyboard or computer).

If you want to quit the game and return to MS-DOS/Windows click the arrow at the bottom, left corner of the screen.

When you want to proceed to the next menu and begin a new game click the arrow at the bottom, right corner of the screen. You will then be taken to the settings menu.

From this menu you also have access to two extra menu screens, which will be explained right here below, called *AI & Game* and *Settings*.

AI & Game menu

Here you can select the strength of your computer-controlled opponent, the speed of the manually controlled cannons and also the amount of bonus objects that will appear on the playfield.

AI difficulty

The strength of the computer opponent can be selected in five steps (the colored bar range from red through yellow and ends with green). The longer the colored bar is, the more difficult the computer opponent will be.

There are three important things that are changed with the increasing or decreasing difficulty of the computer, which are:

- The speed of the computer controlled cannon
- How good the computer will react to the surrounding bonus objects
- The aiming strength and ability to shoot straight towards the goal

Player speed

Here you choose how fast the manually controlled cannons should move. The longer the colored bar is, the easier the game will be to master. This setting affects both the keyboard and mouse controlled cannons, the game tries to adjust the in-game mouse speed to reflect these changes.

Bonus amount

This option controls how many bonus objects there can be simultaneously on the screen at the same time and also the possibility that there will appear bonus objects on the playfield at all.

This can be controlled, like the computer opponent strength, in five steps. The longer the colored bar is, the more objects will appear on the screen at once and the rate at which they appear will also increase.

When you have made your selections, you can go back to the main menu by clicking the arrow at the bottom, left corner of the screen.

Settings menu

On this screen you can, for the moment, adjust how many balls you should be able to keep in play at the same time and after which time they explode and disappear from the screen, making room for new, fresh balls to be shot from your cannon.

Ball amount

You can select between three and seven balls to be kept on the playfield at once (the default, and in my opinion the most playable, value is five balls at the same time).

Ball life length

The life length of the balls can be defined between 2,4 seconds and 7,2 seconds. The default value is 4,8 seconds and works best in most cases, but select a lower value if you want to have a faster, more action-filled game. If you want to lower the action, simply select a higher value than the default.

Please note that these settings do (of course) affect both players.

When you have made your selections, you can go back to the main menu by clicking the arrow at the bottom, left corner of the screen.

Level menu

On this screen you can select the game length and which arena and playfield you want to play on.

Time settings

You can set the game time from one minute up to nine minutes in steps of thirty seconds. The default game time is three minutes that should be long enough in the beginning.

Level selection

You have six different levels to play on. Each one has an increasing number of bumpers; making it more difficult the higher you go in the level numbers. If you have not played this game very much, I suggest that you begin to play on the first two levels until you feel comfortable with how the game works.

Arena selection

You can play any of the six levels on three different arenas. The arenas are called *Steel Arena*, *Desert Dome* and *Ice Stadium*.

The *Steel Arena* is the easiest to play, since the balls are rolling quite a long distance making the game fast but easy to control.

The *Desert Dome* is a little bit more difficult since the balls are losing speed much faster, you must constantly attack the ball and at the same time try to not shoot too much in case you need a spare ball or two.

The *Ice Stadium* is the one to choose when you are a bit more experienced with this game. Here the balls will be harder to control since they roll and slide a much longer distance than on the other two playfields. Choose this arena for the ultimate challenge!

If you want to do further selections on the main menu you can click the arrow at the bottom, left corner of the screen which will take you one menu screen back. Don't be worried about the choices you have made here on the level screen since all settings are remembered.

When you want to play the game, you click the arrow at the bottom, right corner of the screen, which will instantly take you to the playfield where the game will begin at once!

Game

Aim of the game

The aim is quite simple; try to score as many points as possible within the amount of time specified in the level menu. The player who has scored the most points when the game is finished has won the game.

How to play

You start the game at the middle of the playfield. When the ball is lifted up to the ground and you see the words *GET READY* you have to be prepared.

If you play with the red cannon you shoot the balls towards the top goal.



Red cannon
(Player one)

If you play with the blue cannon you shoot the balls towards the bottom goal.



Blue cannon
(Player two)

With the help of your cannon, you shoot balls colored in the same color as the small holes on your cannon. These balls will (hopefully) push the larger, green ball (the game ball) towards the end of the playfield where the goals are located.



Red balls
(Player one)



Blue balls
(Player two)



Green ball
(Main target)

As soon as a goal is scored, the game ball and cannons are automatically positioned at the middle of the playfield.

Please note that you have to be of some distance from the game ball with your cannon in order to be able to shoot one of your balls. In other words, you can't shoot your balls onto the top of the game ball. This can be difficult to have in mind in the beginning, but you will soon learn how this works.

If the game ball has not moved some distance in a defined amount of time, the ball will be considered to be “locked” and the ball will be positioned at the center of the playfield again.

You can only have a limited number of own balls released on the playfield at the same time. Besides, you can only shoot a new ball after a defined amount of time has elapsed.

A couple of seconds (the exact time is defined in the settings menu) after the ball has been released from your cannon it will explode and will be free to shoot again.

Hint!

Since you can only have a limited number of balls at the same time and that it will take longer time for the first ball to explode than you can shoot the last available ball, you should try to always have one ball free if you are attacked or have a great chance to score. In that way, you are always prepared with an “extra weapon” when needed.

Beware that the red and blue balls “warps” to the other side of the playfield when they are rolling out at one end of the playfield.

Playfield objects and obstacles

Depending on which level you play, you will find two or more yellow “bricks” on the playfield. These are called *bumpers* and can both help you and ruin your day.



Bumper

When a ball collides with a bumper (no matter if it is a player ball or the game ball) it will accelerate and bounce away from the bumper. If you are really lucky (or unlucky, depending on how the result will be) the game ball can get a real push and accelerate that much that no player will be able to following it and that it rolls into one of the goals.

Hint!

If you are in a really difficult situation, try to make the game ball hit a bumper in such a way that it will bounce off in another direction and give you some time to recover. The game ball will bounce off in the opposite direction of the angle towards the middle of the bumper (if the ball hits the right side of a bumper, it will bounce off straight towards the right side of the playfield no matter what angle it was heading the bumper).

How the score is calculated

There are many ways you can get points, and this will maybe be confusing, but you will see that it is quite simple after all.

First of all, you get **1 point** every second that you manage to have the game ball on the opposite side of the playfield (the part of the playfield separated by the middle line where the opposite goal is located).

The main method to get points is to score goals. A goal will give you **100 points**, and will in other words get more points than one and a half minute of continuous play on one side of the playfield.

The third way of getting points is to let the game ball hit a bumper on the opponent's side of the playfield. This will give you **5 points** every time a bumper is touched.

Hint!

If you are in desperate need of points and there is only a short amount of time left in the game, try to push the game ball towards one bumper and attack the game ball, letting it hit the same bumper several time. This can give you quite many points in little time.

Bonus letters

During the whole game you will see small, brown colored objects appear on the playfield. These small objects can either contain letters or symbols. You pick them up by simply moving your cannon over them.

The objects with letters are used to build up the word *BONUS*. When you have collected all five different letters you will hear a small fanfare and be awarded with **75 points**. Please note that it is not possible to pick up a letter of the same type as you are already carrying (in other words, you can't pick up a "B" if you have collected a "B" already).



Letters B, O, N, U and S. These should give the word BONUS.

You can easily see which letters you have picked up by looking just below your score at the top of the screen. There you will see small yellow squares indicating which letters you already have.

Hint!

Try to consider which will give you the best opportunity, picking up a letter some distance from the game ball while the other player are attacking can be very dangerous if you leave the path to your goal wide open. You should try to collect the letters only when attacking, and be careful where you pick them up when you are defending yourself.

These letters will appear in two complete sets, meaning that if one player has built the word BONUS, the other player will get the same chance.

Bonus objects

Depending on how the bonus setting in the menus are defined, you will apart from the letters also see a variable amount of brown objects with different symbols on. These symbols are picked up in the same way as the letters, by moving your cannon over them. This gives you different kind of help.

Hint!

The effect of these symbols is instantaneous as soon as they are picked up, so beware when and how you use them. In other words, the effect can turn to your opponent's advantage if used at the wrong time.

Here is a short description of what each of these objects does:



This object blasts away a stream of small, yellow balls towards the game ball. This can be used to efficiently block the game ball from moving. These balls explode after a couple of seconds on the playfield.



This object changes the vertical direction of the game ball. If it is heading towards your own goal and you want an easy way to change the opponent's attack to your advantage you should pickup this object. Beware, however, that this object can be very dangerous!



The last object, and least impressive, is this. It gives you an opportunity to slow down the movement of the game ball. The game ball will reduce its speed to one fourth of the current speed. It is very useful in defending situations, but not a clever choice when attacking.

Controllers

- If you are controlling your cannon with keyboard controls, you move your cannon with the *CURSOR* keys and press *SPACE* when you want to shoot one of your balls.
- If you are controlling with mouse, you move the mouse in the direction you want your cannon to travel and shoot your balls with one of the mouse keys. Please note that the speed of the mouse is limited to equal the keyboard movement so that everything should be fair.

If you want to quit a game in progress you press the *ESC* key. Please note that you will not be asked if you want to quit the game, which means that you will instantly be taken to the main menu.

Credits

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