

The Game Worlds of Jason Rohrer

Gameplay Manual and User Instructions



Inside a Star-filled Sky (2011)

the Davis.

DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE

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Transcend (2005)

Objective: Destroy the major “anti-glyph” in each level

1. Press the arrow keys to move your character (your “glyph”).
2. Press the “S” and “F” keys to slide left and right.
3. Press “SPACEBAR” to shoot.
4. Press “D” to pick up and drop elements.

Strategy Hints:

1. You can shoot (“SPACEBAR”) at the minor anti-glyphs moving towards you, but in order to land hits on the major anti-glyph, you’ll need to gather the elements at the border of the map and bring them to the center.
2. Be aware that the minor Anti-Glyphs will begin to push the elements out of the center of the map, destroy them or move quickly to prevent this.
3. This game is deceptively difficult, Finishing all three levels will require that you maintain your patience as you accomplish your tasks: the moment you get too greedy is the moment your hard work starts to unravel.

Cultivation (2007)

Objective: Grow food for yourself while keeping peace with your neighbors

1. All in-game actions are controlled with the mouse.
2. Click on the on screen buttons and follow in-game prompts.

Strategy Hints:

1. Click through the optional pre-game tutorial to orient yourself to the game. This tutorial is HIGHLY recommended.
2. Your first goal is survival—for which you need to eat. There are three nutrients: Red, Yellow and Purple. The small spheres at the rear of your character (your “gardener”) reveal your nutrient levels. To gain food, plant the seeds that appear on the left side bar.
3. As you plant more and more seeds (and your plot of land expands), you will eventually attract attention from the neighboring gardeners. You may choose to treat them generously—offering them food or even mating with them. The life expectancy of your gardener may be quite short, so to ensure the survival of your plot, make sure to breed quickly.
4. Eventually, the finite space of the game and the proliferating number of gardeners gives rise to conflicts that cannot be solved with generosity. You may have to poison plants, which renders them toxic for both you and your fellow gardeners. Too much kindness will result in all of your food disappearing, but too much hostility will yield a poisoned game world inhospitable to all.
5. There are also a number of deep possibilities in the game few have discovered. As the game’s launch website cryptically proclaimed, "For those who do not fear sacrifice: your souls will burn bright trails in the night sky."

Passage (2007)

Objective: Score points as you advance through the maze

1. Use the arrow keys to move.
2. Points are scored by advancing to the right.

Strategy Hints:

1. At the beginning, you may choose to pair with a female character. Doing so will yield double points but makes navigating the maze more difficult.
2. You may also receive points by finding treasure chests.
3. Make sure to play through to the end of the game, which occurs after five minutes.

Gravitation (2008)

Objective: Score points by collecting stars

1. Use the arrow keys to move, "SPACEBAR" to jump.
2. Points are scored by collecting stars from the platforms. When you collect a star, it will fall to the ground level, where it must be pushed into the furnace (at right) to receive points.

Strategy Hints:

1. You start on the ground level playing catch with a small child. Returning the ball to him will expand your view and make it easier to ascend on to the platforms to collect stars. When your hair catches fire, it is a good time to leap on to the platforms.
2. As you spend additional time on the platforms, your view will start to constrict. To expand it, return to the child and the ball.
3. The key to the game is striking a balance between three activities: playing catch with the child, collecting stars among the platforms, and pushing the stars into the furnace to receive points.
4. These activities must be balanced with the countdown timer, which limits each game to eight minutes.

Between (2008)

Objective: You and another player must complete towers by stacking correctly colored blocks on a patterned grid

1. *Between* is a two-player game. Press "ENTER" twice to start. Both players should choose "Join a game with a stranger."
2. You may also select "Create a New Game for a Friend to Join" and the second player selects "Join a Game That a Friend Has Started." You will then need to enter a shared code to begin.
3. Follow the instructions that the game gives you.
3. Do not to look at the other person's screen or communicate with them.

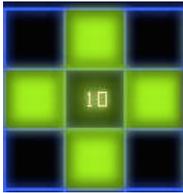
Strategy Hints:

1. Players must generate colored blocks using a 2-by-2 frame and an inventory of red, green, and blue blocks; once the blocks match those on the tower template, you may place them in the corresponding slot; for each correct placement, you receive feedback in the form of a song that plays and assumes new sonic layers with each added block.
2. By pressing the S and W keys (which stand for "Sleeping" and "Waking"), you move among three dream worlds that are identical, except for varied environments of grass, soil, and tundra; each space reveals its own tower.
3. This is not a competitive game; your success depends on the other player's success!
4. At first you only have access to red, green, and blue blocks to fill the multicolored slots on the towers, but you also need magenta, yellow, and cyan blocks that are not accessible at the game's start: these three other block types only appear once the other player makes progress on their tower.

Primrose (2009)

Objective: Score points by surrounding colored tiles

1. Press the “P” button and then tap new game to start.
2. Tiles come in pairs. Tap the grid to place tiles. First tile in pair may be placed anywhere. Second tile must be placed along the “plus signs.”
3. Try to surround a tile group of one color with another color. Corners do not count in the “surround.”



Receive ten points for surrounding a single square on all four sides.

4. Surrounded color groups will be cleared from the board and points tallied.
5. The game ends when the board is filled.

Strategy Hints:

1. Consider starting in the corners. The corners are powerful positions because they are easy to surround: corner squares only need to be “surrounded” on two sides.
2. Try to create chain reactions by surrounding a tile on two or three sides with tiles of one color and tiles of a different color on the remaining sides. Making all of the surrounding tiles the same color through a first reaction will create a chain reaction. Chain reactions of many steps are possible, with exponentially increasing score bonuses.
3. The “P” menu option also allows for a colorblind compatible gameplay mode.

Inside A Star-filled Sky (2011)

Objective: Advance to the next level

1. Use the arrow keys to navigate.
2. Use the mouse to aim the crosshair that targets your weapon. Click the mouse button to shoot.
3. Advance to the next level by finding and moving your character over the green arrow keys at the end of each level.

Strategy Hints

1. Find and collect yellow power-ups, which augment your health or your weapon. You may pick up a power-up by moving your character over it. You may only hold three at a time. Power-ups only take effect when you have reached the level AFTER the one in which you picked them up.
2. Many objects—including power-ups and even enemies—can be entered. Entering a power-up gives you the ability to modify its effects, while entering an enemy gives you the ability to undermine their power. To enter an object, hold the “SHIFT” key and roll the crosshair over it.
3. When combined, these two strategy tips can create bewildering complexity in the game—which Rohrer suggests would take millennia to play all the way through. You may for example, encounter an enemy you cannot defeat. You may enter that enemy to try to weaken its weapon, but find that you have to enter a power-up inside the enemy to do this. The interior of this power-up will be guarded by additional enemies that may need to be entered...

Cordial Minuet (2014)

Objective: Win real money by choosing columns and cells

1. *Cordial Minuet* must be played for real money. Before beginning a game, agree on a wager with your opponent. The winner collects the amount of the wager from her opponent.

2. Click on “NEW GAME” or “JOIN GAME.” If game is left in progress, choose the “LEAVE” option at the top right.

2. You are represented by the wishbone cursor, which you slide along the bottom of the grid to select columns. In each round, you choose a column for yourself (in green) and a column for your opponent (in red). Your opponent will also be choosing rows for themselves and for you. Your score for each round will be determined by the number in the cell at the intersection of the column you choose for yourself and the row your opponent chooses for you. Your in-game score appears at the bottom right. The higher score achieved at the end of three rounds wins the hand.

3. Each player begins the game with 100 chips. At the end of each round, you must either bet chips or fold. You may wager any number of chips, but to continue you must at least match the bet made by your opponent. At the end of three rounds, a final bet is placed when both players choose one of their three numbered cells to reveal. The winner then receives the pot and a new hand begins.

4. *Cordial Minuet* ends when either player runs out of chips or chooses the “LEAVE” option at the top right.

Strategy Hints:

1. Because the goal of the game is to end up with higher numbered cells, try to choose columns with a higher average value for yourself. At the beginning, all columns add to 111, but as cells start disappearing (because of rows chosen by your opponent) values will disappear and the average value of each column will differentiate.

2. If you assume your opponent is following strategy hint one, try to choose columns for them that will give them the lowest possible value in their selected row.

3. Consider betting mechanics as well. A good bluff can go a long way, but so can a subtly played high score.

4. The far left contains a helpful visualization. The three columns represent a shifting range of possible final scores with each column selected. The sparse green column represents your possible final scores. The red column represents possible final scores for your opponent, given everything you know about their row selection. The middle green column represents the possible score values your opponent can calculate about you (your version of the red column seen by your opponent).

Perfectionism (2008)

Objective: Align the solid yellow squares with the yellow frames

1. Each screen includes a grid with eight rows and eight columns.
2. You can substitute any row for any other row; you can substitute any column for any other column; click on row or column tabs to select and swap them.
3. Once you've made your move, click on the arrow to move to the next board.
4. You can return to any board to optimize a move even after you've passed it but any movement backward or forward to another board will cost you a move.

Strategy Hints:

1. You have only 100 moves total so conserve them as you play!

Idealism (2008)

Objective: Move through each room and avoid obstacles to reach the door to the next room

1. Use the arrow keys to move your avatar (the white icon) to the end of each room (the blue asterisk).
2. You can shoot enemies when you encounter them by pressing the space bar to shoot and using the mouse to aim.
3. When you encounter a green block, you can touch it to create a shortcut.
4. You have a limited amount of time to complete the game, and the number of asterisks you reach during that time determines your score.

Strategy Hints:

1. Time passes only when you move your avatar through the level, so think through your route before you move, especially in advanced levels.
2. Avoid enemies (red icons) by outmaneuvering them and shooting down the red minions they send in pursuit.
3. The core strategy in the game involves a trade-off: early in the game, you encounter supporters (green diamonds) that shoot at the enemies (red icons); you can choose a) to avoid all green blocks and keep the aid of your supporters or b) move through the green blocks (to create shortcuts through each level) but risk having your supporters withdraw their aid (when they turn into yellow diamonds) and even actively turn against you (when they turn into red diamonds).

Police Brutality (2008)

Objective: Keep police from dragging activists out of the room by dividing or blocking their forces

1. Click on green figures (who are ready to stop the police) in order to select them.
2. Once selected, green figures can be moved around the grid if you click on the position on the grid where you would like to move them.
3. You can also click the yellow icon that appears above any green figure and drag it out to select your shout radius; this shout recruits other spectators who are terrified (red) or may consider helping (yellow).
4. You win if you divide or block police forces, and lose if the police successfully drag an activist out the door.

Strategy Hints:

1. Move figures who are ready to help across the grid in order to block police from dragging activists out the door.
2. When you activate a green figure (who is ready to stop the police) and produce a shout, it recruits other spectators but also attracts attention from the police, so you must quickly move among different figures to distract or trap police!

Immortality (2008)

Objective: Determine your own objective

1. Press the left and right arrow keys to move through the level; if you want to pick up and drop blocks, press the space bar
2. At the start of the game, a timer counts down from 5 minutes.
3. In the center of the playing field (which stretches beyond the immediate screen) is a slot on top of which you can stack blocks in order to increase the score.
4. In addition to the primary score, you can also build a small tower either to collect a skull block or acquire an infinity block.

Strategy Hints:

1. Consider playing multiple times to explore the effects of the skull and the infinity blocks.

Regret (2008)

Objective: Move through the maze and collect as many blue balls as you can

1. Use the arrow keys to move your avatar through the maze.
2. As you move through the maze, you encounter five species of animals: frogs, cardinals, owls, rabbits, and squirrels.
3. When you encounter an animal, use the left and right arrow keys to move through a menu of five food items (carrot, cheese, grapes and wine, bread, or apple) and press the space bar to select one.
4. If you link the right animal with the right food item, the animal lives; if you make the wrong match, you poison the animal and it dies, haunts you, and impedes your progress.

Strategy Hints:

1. The animals and food items are randomly matched in each session of the game.
2. To help you keep track of each animal-food match you discover, the game also contains an infographic at the bottom of the screen.
3. As you encounter ghost animals, you have a chance to feed them again. The food that is compatible with a ghost-animal has no relationship with the food that the animal when alive. However, encounters with ghosts cost one of your blue beads. Ghost encounters do not update the infographic.

i45hg (2008)

Objective: Score as many points as possible

1. On each turn, click on the 9 x 9 grid to position all nine available white stones on the blue squares.
2. Once you decide your move, click the green arrow to commit to your move that round and move to the next.
3. A white stone that is adjacent to one or more black stones scores a point.
4. A white stone that has fewer than three white neighbors becomes black.
5. A square that has three or four black neighbors is removed from the game (replaced with a blank, unusable square).

Strategy Hints:

1. Similar to *Primrose*, consider the power of the corners and sides, where it is easier to control the “surrounding” of the tiles placed.