SPHEROID
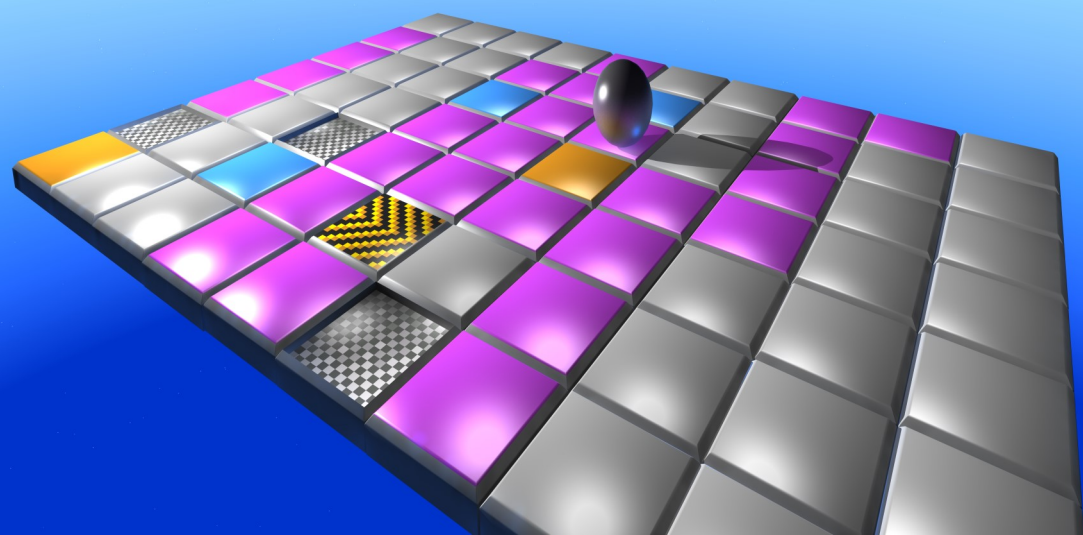
INSTRUCTION MANUAL

ARKANIX LABS

PRESENTS

SPHEROID

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Andrew Fisher (suggestions & testing)

Frank Gasking (testing)

COMPATIBILITY

Spheroid will run on any OCS/ECS/AGA Amiga with at least 1Mb of RAM and AmigaOS versions 1.2 up to 3.2.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Insert the game disk into floppy drive DF0:
2. Plug your joystick into port number 2,
3. Turn on your computer and screen. The game will now load and run automatically.

HARD DISK INSTALLATION

1. Turn on your computer and boot into Workbench from your hard disk.
2. Insert the game disk into floppy drive DF0:
3. On your chosen hard disk partition, create a new drawer called 'Spheroid'.
4. Drag both the game file 'Spheroid' and the drawer called 'data' from the floppy disk, into the newly created drawer on your hard disk partition.
5. Once the files have finished copying, remove the floppy disk then double click on the 'Spheroid' game file on your hard disk to load and run the game automatically.

SPHEROID OVERVIEW

Spheroid is a puzzle game in which you guide a metal sphere around a maze of tiles towards the exit tile, within a time limit and set number of moves. The maze is comprised of various hazards and tile types, each which have a different effect on the metal sphere. There are 50 levels to solve.

THE TITLE SCREEN & OPTIONS

The is the title screen and it contains a number of options:

Move the joystick left and right to move the red box at the bottom of the screen to surround the option you wish to select. Press the fire button to select the option.

The selected option has following effect:

PLAY: On first load, this option begins the game from level 1. On subsequent plays, it will begin the game from that level achieved during the previous play where you received a passcode.

PASSCODE: On completing every 5 levels, you are given a passcode so you don't have to complete earlier levels on future plays. On choosing this option, you are prompted to enter your passcode. Use the numbers on the main keyboard (not the keypad) to enter your code. There is a blank page at the back of this manual on which you can write down your codes when you achieve them.

MUSIC: This option turns the title screen and in-game music on or off. When off, a red cross is displayed over the musical note symbol and no music will play.
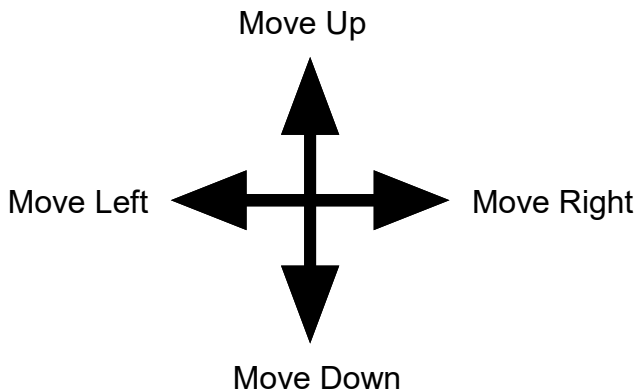
FX: This option turns the in-game sound effects on or off. When off, a red cross is displayed over the FX symbol and no sound effects will play.

QUIT: This option quits the game back to AmigaDOS or Workbench.

NOTE: If you want a real challenge, while on the title screen press 'Del' on the keyboard to reset the game to Level 1 each time before selecting 'Play' with the joystick!

PLAYING SPHEROID

During play, the metal spheroid is moved using the joystick.

Move Up
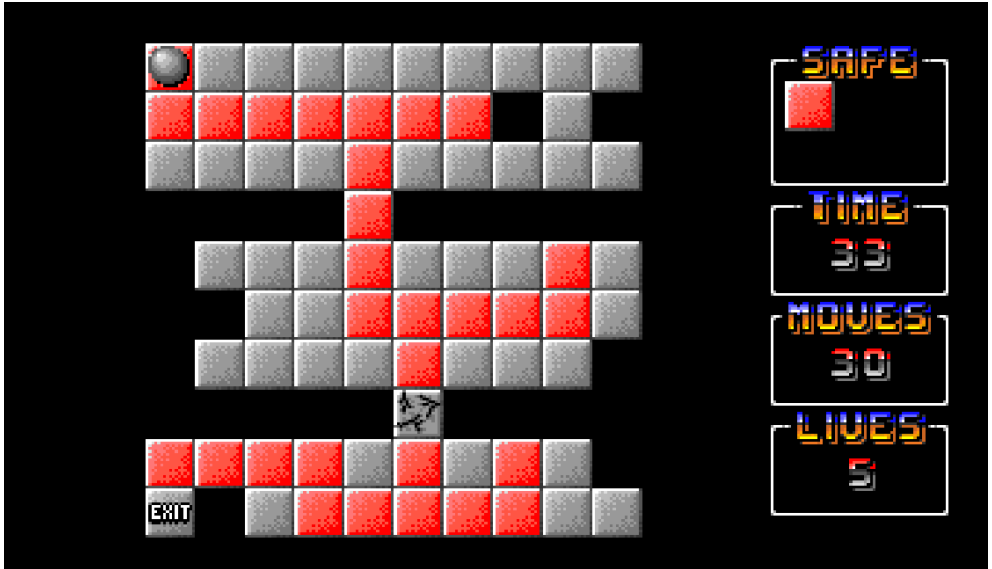
Move Left

Move Right

Move Down

The fire button is used to skip message screens such as 'TIME UP' and 'GAME OVER'.

During a level, you can return to the title screen by pressing 'Esc' on the keyboard.

THE MAIN PLAYING SCREEN

Once the game has begun, the main playing screen will look something like this:

The main play area is on the left of the screen and is comprised of a 10x10 grid of tiles of varying types. The different types are explained later on.

The status panel on the right hand side of the screen contains the following information:

SAFE: This displays the safe coloured tiles for this level. Any other colours will destroy your metal spheroid if manoeuvred upon.

TIME: The time remaining to complete the current level. The timer begins counting down as soon as the level has finished drawing on the screen. However, the timer stops counting down while your metal spheroid is in motion. If the time runs out, you lose a life and the level restarts.

MOVES: The number of moves you have to complete the current level. The number of moves remaining decreases whenever you move the metal spheroid one tile on maze. If you run out of moves, you lose a life and the level restarts.

LIVES: The number of lives remaining. You lose a life if your metal sphere is destroyed, you run out of time or you run out of moves. When there are no lives remaining, the game ends and you are returned to the title screen.

TILE TYPES DURING PLAY

The game screen maze is made of a grid of 10x10 tiles of varying types. These different types are displayed on the title screen (shown earlier) and are explained below:

PLAIN: Plain tiles can be coloured grey, red, orange, blue, purple or green. The spheroid can move freely on these tiles, but on each level only certain colours are safe, as displayed in the status panel. Unsafe tiles will cause the spheroid to explode, losing a life.

VOIDS: Moving onto any black area results in the metal spheroid falling into infinity and the loss of a life.

ICE: An ice tile slides the metal spheroid in the direction it was moving. A change of direction on an ice tile is not possible.

GROOVES: Groove tiles can be both horizontal and vertical. When on a groove tile, your metal spheroid can only move in the direction of the groove. You can only move on to a groove tile if the groove is the same direction as the direction the spheroid is moving, otherwise the spheroid is blocked.

MINE: The spheroid can be safely moved onto a mine tile without harm. However, when moving away, the tile explodes.

TRANSPORTER: When the spheroid moves on to a transporter tile, it is materialised to the other transporter tile on the level. Transporters can be used as many times as required.

BRIDGE SWITCH: When the spheroid moves on to a bridge switch, the switch light changes colour and a riveted bridge is revealed, usually allowing access to previously unreachable parts of the level. A bridge switch can be used once.

BRIDGE: The riveted bridge tile appears when the bridge switch is activated by the spheroid.

CONVEYOR: When the spheroid moves on to a yellow conveyor tile, it is automatically moved in the direction indicated by the arrow on the conveyor tile. Conveyer tiles automatically move the spheroid up, down, left or right. Many conveyor tiles may be placed together in a sequence. Once on a conveyor tile, a change of direction of the spheroid is not possible.

COLOUR SWITCH: When the spheroid moves on to a colour switch, a previously unsafe coloured tile changes into a safe coloured tile, usually allowing access to a previously unreachable part of the level. A colour switch can be used once.

WALL: Quite simply, a wall blocks the path of the spheroid.

CRACKED: The spheroid can be safely moved onto a cracked tile without harm. However, when the spheroid moves to another tile, the cracked tile falls away leaving a void. The remaining void may block future access to a needed part of the maze.

EXIT: The metal spheroid must reach this tile to complete and exit the current level to the next.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPHEROID

The development of Spheroid is a long story and one I would like to share!

The seeds of Spheroid were sown around 1988/9 in SEUCK on the Commodore64. The background editor was used to create a simple maze of coloured blocks, around which the player moved a metal looking ball, with some blocks being 'safe' to move on and some causing the ball to 'explode'. Being SEUCK, it was all <u>very</u> rudimentary...

Around 1990, that idea transferred over to an Amiga 500 on the purchase of AMOS BASIC. The original 'design' went through several changes, improvements and additions, including a swap to AMOS Pro so the compiler could be used and the purchase of an Amiga 1200 in 1992 to further aid development with the increased power. The intention was to create a good quality, free, public domain game, possibly becoming shareware with additional levels and the inclusion of the code.

With the main game engine complete, the majority of the graphics drawn, sound effects sampled and a title tune chosen (at this stage I wanted to use one of my favourite modules, 'Learning to Fly' by Tyrell/Dual Crew), development was halted around 1993(ish) due to exam revision. It was my intention to continue development after my exams were complete. However, for various reasons, including attending university for 4 years to complete a degree, work on the game never resumed...

In 2022, I finally decided to resurrect my A1200 to see what remained of anything on the internal 1Gb hard drive. Amazingly, it booted first time (o.k., it did take a few warm resets...) and straight away I imaged the hard drive to preserve everything on it.

Mounting this drive image in WinUAE, along with all my university work and graphics and music I had created way-back-when, I find the Spheroid AMOS source code and all the assets sitting in a drawer on my 'Work' partition.

However, the code won't run. I remember that I had begun and was half-way through refactoring it as I had used AMOS procedures for all the subroutines without realising there was a limit to how many times procedures could be called using the GOSUB command before AMOS baulked and crashed. Now thirty years later, I didn't have a clue where I had got to, or what needed to be finished to make it work.

Never leave code for 30 years and expect to resume without issues!

Not wanting to waste the game design or assets, not wanting to continue in AMOS and as the game didn't need the raw speed of 68000 assembler, I spent a couple of days relearning Blitz Basic 2 (which I had also used in the early 1990's) and began coding the game from scratch, with the main game engine coming together in a few days!

During those coding sessions, I added additional game elements not in the original AMOS version. However, some of the graphic and sound assets remain as they were pixelled and sampled over 30 years ago!

With the game finally complete, hopefully I have achieved my aim of producing a decent quality game that would have sat happily in the catalogues of various public domain libraries all those years ago.

Please enjoy Spheroid!

Andy Vaisey

ANY PROBLEMS?

If you have any problems loading or playing Spheroid, find any bugs or have any questions about the game, please contact Arkanix Labs using the forum on our website or via the Itch.io Spheroid page.

https://www.arkanixlabs.com/forum/viewforum.php?id=82

https://andyvaisey.itch.io/spheroid

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Spheroid is free to download and play.

However, the game idea, design and content remains the property of Andy Vaisey. All Rights Reserved.

DONATIONS

Hopefully, you downloaded Spheroid using the dedicated Itch.io Spheroid page.

Although the game is free to download and play, if you enjoy playing, we would appreciate a 'donation' towards the cost of development, in particular the maintenance of aging hardware used in testing this and future games.

If you have not done so already, please consider donating!

https://andyvaisey.itch.io/spheroid

PASSCODE NOTES...