

y Dan Radmacher

We've all played — and enjoyed — Breakout or a successor. The original Breakout wasn't much more than Pong! turned on its head with rows of blocks taking the place of an opponent. The objective was to clear out all the bricks. Newer versions and variations added color, more paddles and other enhancements. But it took MacSoft to add a whole new dimension — literally — to this classic computer game.

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Diamonds 3D is Breakout in three dimensions. Your ball is three dimensional. The bricks are three dimensional. Your paddle is a Star-Trek-like force field. You play in a three-dimensional court. And just to make things interesting, the bricks are various colors. Your ball must match a brick's color before you can clear the brick. Special bricks change your ball's color, allowing you to clear levels with more than one color of brick.

Oh, and when you've cleared all the colored bricks, it's time to take out the diamond bricks, which are impervious until every colored brick is gone.

The court you play in resembles nothing more than a racquetball court. In fact, playing Diamonds often reminded me of batting a superball around a racquetball court. Only one problem — the rear wall is made of glass, not that clear plexiglass stuff they put on real racquetball courts. If you miss a ball as it comes back at you, it shatters the glass, and you

lose the ball.

You've got five balls to start with, and you can earn more by hitting special bricks.

[s it fun? You bet.](#)

Diamonds 3D is fun and addictive. The ball can really get going when it starts careening off side walls, the ceiling or impervious bricks. Luckily, you can retain some control if your paddle is fully charged. Holding down the mouse button on a charged paddle allows you to grab the ball and hold it momentarily, long enough to aim it and get it going straight again, at least for a while.

Background music provides unobtrusive but compelling atmosphere. The sound of the ball bouncing off walls and such reminds me the sound of a racquetball. The only sound I don't like is the sound of shattering glass, but if you get good you don't have to hear that too often.

[Balls, Balls, Balls](#)

You can't save a game, but when you reach level 5, a new button appears on the control panel. This allows you to start a game at level 5 with the same number of balls and the same score. If you start from the first level and end up with a better level 5 score (or more balls), you'll hear a chime, and from then until you do better, you can start a game at level five with the better situation. The same thing happens at levels 10, 15 and five-level intervals up to 40. (Diamonds has 50 levels — or at least that's what the manual says. I never got close during the time I had to review the game.)

Conclusion

Diamonds is one of the best Breakout-type games I've played. The only fault I found with the program was the fact that it only comes on CD-ROM. The program is just under 8 megs, which barely makes a dent in the 600 megabytes the CD could hold. Installation from a CD-ROM is easier, of course, and you can even play the game from the CD if you're really, really short on hard drive space. But I feel sorry for that dwindling number of folks without a CD-ROM drive. They don't know what they're missing, and it's a shame MacSoft is depriving them.

Pros

- Great gameplay
- Haven't you always wanted to bounce a huge superball around a racquetball court
- Challenging, but not impossible
- Atmospheric background music

Cons

- No CD-ROM drive? You're out of luck.

Publisher Info

MacSoft
3850 Annapolis Lane, Suite 100
Plymouth, MN 55447

Orders: 1-800-229-2714