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eally, truly, completely addicting games are either a blessing or a curse, depending on when they come into your life. In my case, Zoop showed up just in time for final exams, a 10-page history paper and an almost complete lack of sleep. Darn.

To be frank, Zoop is the most addictive game I've ever played. Long after the fun stops and the pain in your wrist begins, Zoop holds on to its charm. This game has a few problems; it's too simple, it stops being fun after a little while, and it becomes way too difficult. But you can't stop playing. The people who made this game are evil. Eeeevil.

[Turn Your Mind To Mush!](#)

Zoop starts out with a ridiculously simple concept. You control, using the arrow keys and the spacebar, a small triangle. The triangle can navigate within a small box in the center of the screen; it "zoops" out of the box to destroy pieces which move steadily inward. When the pieces touch your box, you go kaboom.

You can only destroy pieces that are the same color as your little guy. Zooping pieces which aren't your color causes a color switch; if you're red and you shoot a green piece, it turns red and you turn green. Simple. This game is kind of like Othello: "Simple to learn, impossible to master."

The only people who are truly good at this game are usually manic. On my computer, the top five scores are taken up by someone with attention deficit disorder. It starts out easily, with a few pieces on the board. But as the levels progress, the pieces move faster; hundreds have to be destroyed, and you just don't have time. They come in from all sides, and the player is eventually reduced to a quivering mass in front of the screen. This game will show you for what you really are, which is really nothing more than an animal.

After about two hours, when you can't move your fingers and your eyes ache from raster burn, the game stops being fun. But you have to keep on playing. Either the game is just addictive by nature, or Hookstone Ltd. does a lot of subliminal message work.

[Not As Peachy As It Could Be.](#)

Zoop is not without problems. The game takes up 1.1 megabytes, which is a good thing for those lucky enough to have color PowerBooks. But the graphics could be better. Flat color gets a little boring after a while.

The music is horrible. This game was released for the PC and various console platforms, and the music shows it. Even QuickTime Musical Instruments sounds better.

Another foible is the weird power-up structure; five purple springs destroys every piece on the board. Why is it a spring instead of an explosion? No one knows. A small glowing blob eliminates all the shapes of the same color. Why? This should be a colored bomb, not a blob.

Finally, I think that this game gets too annoying too fast. The concept is so simple that it loses its appeal after a few days. The levels become simply too difficult; you can't stop playing, but you don't have fun.

The Final Word

If you want to lose yourself in a game, Zoop is perfect. Make sure you have your calendar cleared in advance. Zoop has a few problems, but for the price it's an excellent value. I highly recommend this game for anyone with an arcade/puzzle bent.

Pros

- Incredibly addictive
- So addictive that you won't stop playing!
- Small and economical
- Very easy to learn
- REALLY ADDICTIVE!

Cons

- Loses its appeal quickly
- Graphics and sounds are disappointing
- Powerups are pretty random and hard to interpret