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How To Order Rings Of The Magi
Contacting MVP Software

The Story:

The Tale of the Magi

In ages long past, the mystics of Ac`Rianed realized their powers were dwindling, and the art of the Magi was quickly being forgotten.   The life energy of their world, which fueled their magic, was slowly drained by some unknown, yet terrible force.   The people of Ac`Rianed were wasting away, while the mystics felt powerless to protect them.

Thus is was that the mystics came together and crafted their rings - a set of artifacts in which they could store their remaining power.   Each mystic fashioned a set of rings from a distinctive material, and whenever two or more of these similar rings were brought together, the power within them could be harnessed.   By separating the rings into different patterns and then reassembling them, different aspects of that power could be called upon.

But it was not enough to simply store this power in the rings.   New apprentices had to be trained, lest the secret of the rings be forgotten and the world fall into ruin.   Thus was created a special training board upon which novice users of the rings could safely practice their assembly.   Only by successfully completing this training can the apprentice hope to restore peace to Ac`Rianed, and command the *Rings of the Magi*...

Intro Sequence

Intro Sequence

When the program starts, an introduction and story sequence is displayed.   The intro/story consists of a number of short scenes, each of which remains on screen for a short while before advancing to the next scene.

You may advance to the next scene more rapidly by pressing a key or clicking a mouse button. You may also bypass the intro/story sequence completely by pressing the [Esc] key at any time.

If you do not want the intro/story sequence displayed when the program starts, use the Show Intro option on the Preferences dialog.

Getting Started

Beginning A Game
Selecting A Board
How To Play
Hints and Tips

Beginning A Game

To start a new game, you may either select New from the <u>Game Menu</u> or press the **play game** button on the <u>Graphical Menu</u>.   The play game button will resume your current game if you have already started one, or start a new game if one is not yet in progress.

To load a previously saved game select Open from the Game Menu.

Once you have either started a new game or opened a previously saved game, you will be taken directly to the board selection screen where you may select one of the puzzles and begin playing.

Selecting A Board

The board selection screen allows you to choose which particular game board you wish to play (or edit).   You may play the boards in any order that you desire.   After successfully completing a board, the game will automatically select the next board for you when you return to the board selection screen; however, you may manually select a different board.

In the upper left corner of the screen is the board preview display area, on which a miniature version of the game board is displayed.   As you select from among the game boards, this display will change to reflect the currently selected board.   If you have already solved the currently selected board at least once it will be surrounded by a glowing red border.   You may, however, replay a board that you have previously solved if you wish to attempt to improve your score on that board.

Your current best score for this particular board is displayed just below the board preview display area, as well as your total score for the entire game.

The number and name of the current board are displayed just to the right of the board preview display area.   You may select the next or previous game board within the current difficulty level by using the up/down buttons just below the board number display.

The difficulty level may be changed by pressing one of the buttons located in the lower right corner labeled **novice**, **apprentice**, **journeyman**, **master** and **custom**.

Once you have selected the desired board, press the **accept** button to begin playing.   Or you may press the **quit** button to return to the main menu without playing the board.

There are 100 boards in total, 25 in each of the first four difficulty levels.   (The shareware version contains 12 boards, 3 in each of the first four difficulty levels).   Additionally, you may create your own custom boards within the **custom** difficulty level, or play custom boards created by other owners of *Rings of the Magi: Grand Master Edition*.
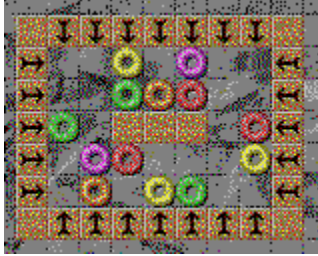
How To Play

Objective
Game Board Layout
Scoring
Recovering From A Bad Move
Completing A Board

Objective

The object of the game is to remove all of the colored rings from the game board. Once all the rings have been removed from a particular board, that puzzle is completed and you may move on to the next puzzle.

Rings are removed from the game board whenever two or more rings of the same color come into direct contact with one another. The rings cannot be moved directly, but are affected by arrow buttons located throughout the game board.

Arrow buttons indicate the direction in which they will exert their force. When an arrow button is pressed, all the rings in the indicated row or column will move one step in the indicated direction, unless blocked or hidden behind a solid object.

Ring movement may be blocked by a solid wooden game piece, or by an arrow button, or by another ring if that ring is itself blocked by some solid object. Additionally, a ring may be blocked by the edge of the game board itself -- it is not possible to push a ring off the edge of the game board.

Game Board Layout

The large playing area at the left of the screen is where the game actually takes place.   Upon this playing area you will see rings of various colors placed along side the arrow buttons in many different arrangements.   To move the rings, simply point to the desired arrow button and press the mouse button.

In the upper right is the score display.   The board score is your current score for this board during this attempt to solve it.   The total score is your total score for all boards that you have solved so far. The board name is a descriptive name describing the board you are currently playing -- the board name sometimes contains a clue about the challenge that you might face while solving this board.

undo - Pressing the **undo** button will restore the game board to the state it was in before the most recent ring movement.   Only the most recent movement can be undone.   If your score changed during the most recent move, it is also restored to its previous value.

solve - Pressing the **solve** button allows you to view one of the possible solutions for this game board.   A bright green outline will surround the solve button while the solution is in progress.   The game board will then be restarted and the arrow buttons will be automatically pressed to solve the board.   You may interrupt the solution at any time by pressing a mouse button or the [Esc] key.

restart - Pressing the **restart** button will restore the game board to its original configuration.   Your score will also be reset to the value it had when this board was selected.

cancel - Pressing the **cancel** button allows you to leave this game board without completing the puzzle.   A message window will pop up on screen asking if you wish to leave before solving the current board.   If you wish to resume play, select **no**.   If you wish to leave and return to the board selection screen, select **yes**.

Scoring

Points are awarded as the rings are matched up and removed from the game board.   Additional points are awarded for simultaneously removing several rings with a single movement.   The following table is an example of some scoring combinations:

```
NUMBER OF RINGS
MATCHED/REMOVED          SCORE
---------------          -----
       2                   40
       3                   90
       4                  160
       5                  250
       6                  360
       .                    .
       .                    .
```

Recovering From A Bad Move

It is possible to move a ring or match up several rings in such a way as to make the game board impossible to solve.   If this happens you should immediately try "undo"-ing your last move.   If you do not undo that move, and continue playing, you may receive a warning message indicating that the game board cannot be solved.

This message will only appear if the game board cannot be solved AND the "undo" version of the game board also cannot be solved.   This gives you the opportunity to correct the mistake yourself before receiving a warning.   The "Early Warning" game option on the <u>Preferences</u> dialog allows you to change this behavior.   With the Early Warning option on, you will receive the warning message as soon as the game board becomes unsolvable.

If you receive this warning you will be asked if you wish to restart the board.   If you select **yes** the board will be reset to its initial state and you may try to solve it again.   If you select **no** the board will remain in its current state and you may continue to play the board as is, although it will not be possible to actually solve the puzzle.

You may also restart the game manually at any time by pressing the **restart** button.

Completing A Board

Upon completion of each game board, one of the Mystics of Ac`Rianed will appear and deliver a message regarding your performance.   You may press any key or a mouse button to advance through this message more rapidly.

Upon completion of each complete level of game boards, you will be awarded one of the symbolic finger rings which indicate the status of a Ring Master.   Once you have collected all four finger rings you will have truly earned the title Ring Master, and will receive yet another award.   You may then join your fellow magi and command the *Rings of the Magi*, helping restore peace to the people of Ac`Rianed.

Congratulations!

Hints And Tips

If you make a mistake, use the **<u>undo</u>** button right away!   If you keep going without undo-ing your mistake you may not be able to solve the board!

Take a good long look at the board before you begin moving the rings.   Are there any "dead" areas into which you should avoid moving the rings?

Try counting the number of rings of each color to help plan your strategy.   For example, if there are five red rings on the board, you'll know that you need to create both a three-ring match and a two-ring match.

Sometimes you may need to delay matching some of the rings in order to set up a situation in which you can first match the other rings.   Plan ahead, and don't remove a ring that you think you'll need later.

When pressing an arrow button, always check that you will be moving only the rings that you intend to move.   This is especially true with the 4-way arrow button.   Check in all four directions to verify that it's safe to press this button.

If you just can't seem to solve a particular board, try viewing the first portion of the solution by pressing the **solve** button.   Perhaps it will suggest a new strategy to you.

Often, the first match is the most difficult.   Once the first match has been accomplished the other matches are often much easier.   For very difficult boards, try enabling the <u>Partial Solve</u> option, then press the **solve** button.   After the first match, interrupt the solution by pressing a mouse button and try to finish the board on your own.

Have you found the hidden game?   There is a stone frame which surrounds the <u>graphical menu</u> - try pressing each of the stones in the upper right corner, one of them is a secret button!   Enjoy!

The Menus

There are two menu systems in Rings of the Magi.   The menu bar at the top of the screen, and the Graphical Menu.   The menu bar is always visible and contains common commands and options which you may need to access at any time during your game.   The Graphical Menu is not available while a game is in progress, and presents you with various other commands which you may select while not in a game.

Graphical Menu
Game
Window
Options
Help

Graphical Menu

 To start a new game, you may either select New from the Game Menu or press the graphical **play game** button.   The play game button will resume your current game if you have already started one or start a new game if one is not yet in progress.

The **credits** button allows you to view the names of those responsible for creating Rings of the Magi.

The **editor** button allows you access to the custom board editor, where you may create your own custom puzzles.

The **instructions** button displays a short sequence of brief instructions describing game play and the functions of the various screens.   More extensive instructions are available within this help file.

The **high scores** button will display the list of players who have achieved the highest scores to date.

The **exit** button allows you to leave the program.   Note that there are numerous ways to leave the program, including this **exit** button, the Exit menu item on the Game Menu, the Ctrl-X shortcut, the system menu at the top left of the window, and the close button at the upper right of the window for users of Windows 95.

<u>N</u>ew	Ctrl+N
<u>O</u>pen...	Ctrl+O
<u>S</u>ave	Ctrl+S
Save <u>A</u>s	Ctrl+A
<u>Q</u>uit	Ctrl+Q
<u>R</u>esume	Ctrl+R
E<u>x</u>it	Ctrl+X

Game Menu

The Game Menu allows you to start a new game, open a previously saved game, save the current game, quit the current game, resume a suspended game, or exit the program.   Note that not all options are available at all times.

New - Starts a new game and takes you immediately to the board selection screen where you may select a board and begin playing.

Open - Loads a previously saved game and takes you immediately to the board selection screen where you may select a board and begin playing.

Save - Saves your current game.   If you have not previously saved your game you will be prompted to enter a filename.   If you have previously saved your game it will be saved immediately as the current filename.

Save As - Saves your current game, prompting you for a new filename.

Quit - Leaves the current game and returns to the main menu.   If you are currently in the middle of solving a board, you will be prompted for confirmation before leaving the game.

Resume - If you have a game open but are not currently playing it, this option allows you to continue playing the current game.   You will be taken immediately to the board selection screen where you may select a board and resume playing.

Exit - Exits Rings of the Magi.   You will first be prompted for confirmation.   If you have unsaved changes in your game, you will be given the opportunity to save your game before exiting.

| Small |
| Medium |
| Large |
Extra Large
Fix Aspect
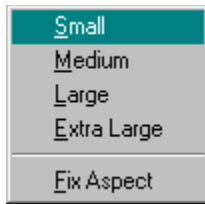
Window Menu

The Window Menu allows you to change the appearance of the game window.

Small
Medium
Large
Extra Large - Each of these options selects one of the *preferred* resolutions for the game and centers the game window on the screen.   These particular resolutions offer correct aspect ratio as well as performance benefits.   You should choose a resolution based on your Windows display resolution, the speed of your computer and your personal preference.

(The author prefers the Large resolution in most cases - if the computer is fast enough to support it.   Note that while these resolutions are preferred, you are always free to manually resize the game window to **any** size that you choose, including maximizing it.   These predefined sizes are simply for convenience, you are not limited to them.)

Fix Aspect - If you have manually resized the game window, it may not be perfectly "square".   That is, it may be either too tall or too wide, thus distorting the images.   Fix aspect will correct this problem by adjusting the width and height of the game window so that it is "square" without changing the total screen *area* of the game window.

Music / Sound...	Ctrl+V
Preferences...	Ctrl+P
Clear High Scores	
Review Awards	
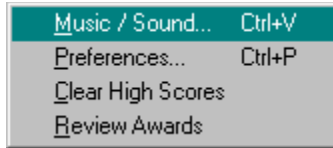
Options Menu

The Options Menu allows you to change various game settings and access optional features.

The **Music/Sound** menu item allows you to select the type and volume of music and sound within the game.

The **Preferences** menu item allows you to change the speed of the game, as well as enable or disable various additional features.

The **Clear High Scores** menu item allows you to completely reset the high scores roster.   You will be prompted for confirmation before the roster is cleared.

The **Review Awards** menu item allows you to see the awards that you've acquired so far. Awards are given once you have completed all of the boards within a difficulty level, and when you have completed the entire game.   This menu item is only available if you have previously acquired at least one award.   It is also not available while a game is in progress.

Music and Sound
Preferences

Music and Sound
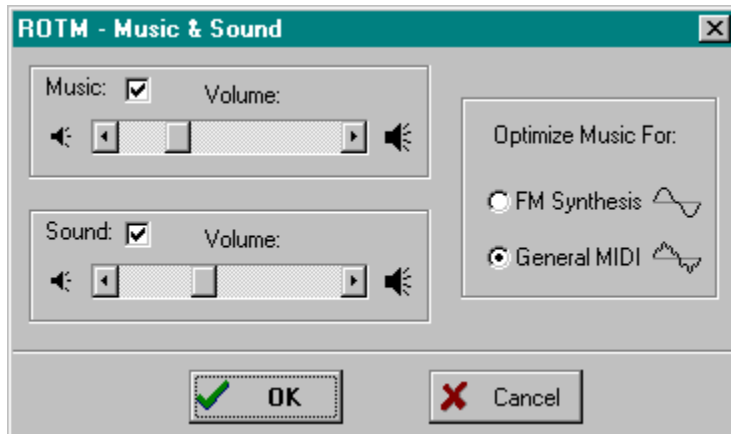
   The Music and Sound dialog box allows you to turn music and sound effects on or off, as well as adjust their volume and optimize the music for your particular sound card.

Music - The check box allows you to turn the music on or off.   The volume slider allows you to adjust the volume of the music.

Sound - The check box allows you to turn the sound effects on or off.   The volume slider allows you to adjust the volume of the sound effects.

Optimize Music For - If you have a sound card which uses FM synthesis to generate music, such as a SoundBlaster or compatible, you may want to select the music which has been optimized for FM synthesis sound cards.   If you have a sound card which uses wavetable synthesis to generate music, such as the AWE32, you may want to select the music which has been optimized for General MIDI.   Simply select the type of music which sounds best in your opinion with your sound card.

Preferences
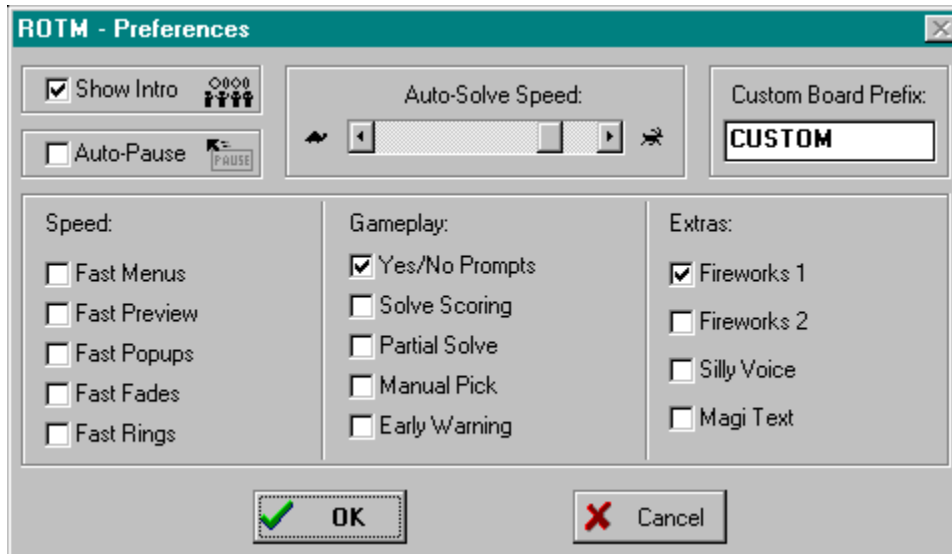
General Options
Speed Options
Gameplay Options
Extra Options

General Options

Show Intro - If this option is ON the introductory story sequence will be shown when the game is started.   If this option is OFF the story will be bypassed.   You may also advance through the intro more rapidly by pressing a key or mouse button, or you may bypass the entire story manually by pressing the [Esc] key at any time during the intro.

Auto-Pause - If this option is ON the game will automatically pause whenever the mouse cursor leaves the game area.   This may reduce mouse flicker on some computers.   If this option is OFF the game will not automatically pause as the mouse leaves the game area.   (In either case, the game will still pause whenever a menu is activated.)

Auto-Solve Speed - This slider controls the speed at which the Auto-Solve feature solves the board. Slide the control towards the turtle on the left for slower speeds, or towards the gazelle on the right for faster speeds.

Custom Board Prefix - This is the first six letters of the filename used to save and load custom boards which you have created with the board editor.   The actual number of the board is appended to this prefix to create the final filename.   By default, the prefix is "CUSTOM", thus the boards you create will be named CUSTOM01.BRD, CUSTOM02.BRD, etc.

Preferences

Speed Options

The Speed Options trade quality of animation for speed of game play.   When these options are enabled they make the game quicker by reducing the amount of animation associated with some particular aspect of the game.

Also note that if you are having trouble with the speed of the game in general, you may want to consider some of the options under the Window Menu, or see the Troubleshooting section.

Fast Menus - If this option is ON, the menu trap-door animation on the Graphical Menu screen is reduced.

Fast Preview - If this option is ON, the board preview display flipping animation on the board selection screen is reduced.

Fast Popups - If this option is ON, the magi pop-up messages zooming animation on the playing board screen is reduced.

Fast Fades - If this option is ON, the animated transitions between screens are reduced.

Fast Rings - If this option is ON, the rings movement animation on the playing board screen is reduced.

Preferences

Gameplay Options

Yes/No Prompts - If this option is ON, you will be prompted before certain actions, such as starting a new game if a game is currently in progress, quitting a game while you are currently attempting to solve it, and exiting the program.   If this option is OFF, the requested action will be performed without prompting.

Solve Scoring - If this option is ON, you will accumulate points when boards are solved by the Auto-Solve feature.

Partial Solve - If this option is ON, you will be allowed to interrupt the Auto-Solve feature without restarting the game board.   You may then finish solving the board manually.

Manual Pick - If this option is ON, then the next board will not be automatically selected for you after completion of a board.   You must then select your next board manually.

Early Warning - If this option is ON, you will receive a warning message immediately upon executing a move which leaves the board in an unsolvable state.   If you choose not to restart the board, then be sure you **undo** your most recent move if you wish to be able to solve this board.   If this option is OFF, you will not receive this warning message until even an undo cannot restore the board to a solvable state.

Preferences

Extra Options

Fireworks 1 - If this option is ON, additional animation will occur whenever rings are matched and removed from the board.   A small number of ring fragments will explode outwards around the matched rings.

Fireworks 2 - If this option is ON, additional animation will occur whenever rings are matched and removed from the board.   A large number of round ring fragments will explode outwards across the entire screen.

 (*You may turn on/off either fireworks option individually, or both options simultaneously*.)

Silly Voice - If this option is ON, the magi which congratulates you at the end of each successfully solved board will develop a sweet tooth, and occasionally respond with a new message.

Magi Text - If this option is ON, the text of the magi's congratulatory speech is displayed on screen. (*This option is primarily intended for hearing-impaired players, and those without sound cards.*)

Preferences

Contents
About ROTM...
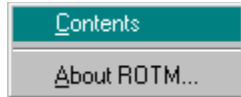
Help Menu

The Help menu displays information about *Rings of the Magi*.

Contents - Activates this online help file.

About ROTM - Displays version and copyright information.

The Editor

The board editor allows you to create your own game board layouts -- all without any programming knowledge required!   Creating new game boards is as simple as using a paint program.   Simply "paint" the game board with the desired game pieces, and then play it!   What you see is what you get!

You must first select one of the custom boards that you wish to edit.   For more information on this process, see Selecting A Board.   Notice that the score windows will contain the word *editor* to indicate that you are in edit mode.   You may only select among the boards within the **custom** difficulty level while in edit mode -- you cannot edit the original game boards that came with *Rings of the Magi*.

Editor Layout
Editing Tasks
Solution Recorder

Editor Layout

The large playing area at the left of the screen is where actual editing takes place.   It is on this game board grid that you may place the various game pieces in whatever arrangement you desire.

In the upper right is the current object display.   This indicates which of the game piece objects is currently selected for use with the editor.

Below the current object display is the selection area.   You may select one of the game piece objects by pointing to it within this area and pressing a mouse button.

Below the selection area is the board name entry display.   You may create a distinctive name for your board by pointing to the entry window and pressing a mouse button.   A red cursor will appear, indicating that you may then type in a name from the keyboard.   Press [Enter], or click the mouse outside the entry window   to complete the process.

The **save** button writes your new board to a file.   The exact filename is determined by the Custom Boards Prefix option on the Preferences dialog.   Make sure you save your edited board if you wish to be able to play it later.

The **play** button allows you to try out your newly created board in "test" mode and check that the board plays how you expected.   While playing in "test" mode, your total score will not be affected.

The **quit** button will return you to the board selection screen.

Editing Tasks

Editing Tasks

Editing a game board consists of first selecting a game piece, then placing that game piece on the game board.   The game boards within *Rings of the Magi* consist of twelve distinct game piece objects and areas of blank space.   There are six different colored rings, one solid piece, and five arrow buttons.

These various objects are selected by pointing to the desired object in the selection area and pressing a mouse button.   The newly selected game piece will then be displayed as the current object and will remain the current object until a new one is selected.

To place the current object on the game board, simply point to the grid cell where you would like to place it and press the left mouse button (LMB).   You may also continue to hold down the mouse button and drag the mouse to repeatedly place the object throughout the board.

An alternative method for selection the current editing object is to use the right mouse button (RMB) to point to an object *already* on the game board and grab it for later use.   You may then place it with the left mouse button as described above.

Summary:

```
LMB = PUT object  on  game board
RMB = GET object from game board
```

Editor Layout

Solution Recorder

You may record your own solution "scripts" for each of the custom boards that you create.   Once in record mode, the program will remember each of the moves that you perform in order to solve the current game board.   When you have finished recording, you may then press the **solve** button at any time to automatically solve your custom boards, just as it works with the original game boards.

Record mode is activated by pressing *Ctrl-R* while playing a game board.   A bright red outline will surround the **solve** button while recording is in progress.

You may cancel record mode by pressing *Ctrl-R* again.   Record mode is also cancelled if you press the **solve**,   **restart** or **cancel** buttons.

You may use the **<u>undo</u>** button while recording - the move which you undid will not be recorded as part of your solution script.

Keyboard Shortcuts

There are keyboard equivalents for every button displayed on the screen.   Typically the shortcut key is the first letter of the button's label.

For example, the shortcut key for the **restart** button on the game board screen is "R".   Pressing the "R" key will have exactly the same effect as clicking on the **restart** button with the mouse.

Additionally, the [Enter] key is often used as an *additional* keyboard shortcut for buttons which are commonly pressed, or which confirm an action.   The [Esc] key is often used for buttons which are commonly used to cancel or quit an action.

For example, the [Enter] key serves as a shortcut for the **accept** button on the board selection screen, while the [Esc] key serves as a shortcut for the **quit** button.

Troubleshooting

The game plays slowly on my computer:

- Rings of the Magi runs best in 256 color display modes (also known as 8-bit display modes). If you have Windows configured for a different display mode you may wish to try changing your display settings.
- You may want to experiment with the various window sizes available under the Window Menu to find one which might perform better.
- If you are using Windows 3.x, you can improve performance by installing WinG. Microsoft released WinG as an add-on for Windows 3.x specifically to improve graphics performance, and Rings of the Magi will take advantage of it if present.
- If you are running other programs in the background while playing Rings of the Magi, try closing them - they may be using up valuable system resources.
- You can speed up several specific aspects of the game by enabling the Speed Options on the Preferences dialog.

When I run ROTM with other applications the colors go crazy:

- In 256-color display modes, all running applications must share the **same** set of 256 colors. However, only one application (the **active** application) has control of the color palette at any one time - this may cause inactive applications to look "funny", since they are forced to use the "wrong" color palette. An application should restore its own colors once it is again activated. If you are using 256-color wallpaper it will be similarly affected by the changing color palettes.

I hear no music, or cannot adjust the volume of the music:

- ROTM may be unable to change the volume on some sound cards with older driver software. (The SoundBlaster AWE32 is one such card.) If this happens you will not be able to adjust the music volume with the volume slider. You might not hear music at all if the volume is set low. To solve this problem you should acquire and install the latest driver software from your sound card manufacturer. (The SoundBlaster AWE32 will work correctly with ROTM if the latest driver software is installed.)

Credits

Design & Programming

David Bollinger

Art & Animation

Tom Marlin, Marlin Studios

Composer

David B. Schultz, DBS Music

Voice of the Magi

Dale Blackwood

Producer

C. Steven Blackwood

Publisher

MVP Software

How To Order Rings Of The Magi

This game is shareware.   You may freely try it.   If you like it or find it useful, then you must register with MVP Software.   To "register" a shareware game means to purchase it directly from the developer.   (Shareware games are evaluation versions only, which means you have the right to try them, but after trying them you must either register them with the author or delete them from your system.   It is unlikely that anyone will check up on you, so shareware works because of the honesty of users.)   When you register you will receive Rings of the Magi for Windows: Grand Master Edition, which includes all of the following additional features:

   * Over 8 times as many puzzles; 100 puzzles in all.
   * Additional graphics; 3 times as much.
   * New animations and awards sequences.
   * Auto-solve feature. Stuck on a hard level? This is what you need!
   * Level editor. Create your own custom puzzles and stump your friends.
   * Bonus features, animations and options.
   * Printed manual full of hints and tips from the author.

To order, call MVP's 24-hour order hotline at 800-968-9684 or 616-831-7985.   Please have your Master Card or Visa ready when you call.   Or fill out the order form and fax it to 616-831-7981. Make sure your credit card number and expiration date are legible.   Or if you prefer mail the order form and your check to:
   MVP Software, P.O. Box 888281, Grand Rapids, MI 49588.

The price is $19.95 plus shipping.   Shipping is $4.00 in the US, $5.00 to Canada, and $6.00 to everywhere else.   Michigan residents please add $1.44 sales tax.

How to Register Online and Receive
Rings of the Magi for Windows: Grand Master Edition Immediately!

MVP is pleased that Rings of the Magi for Windows: Grand Master Edition can now be registered online, with immediate download of the registered version.   This service is available to anyone who has access to the World Wide Web and has a Master Card or Visa.   To register Rings of the Magi online, set your web browser to **http://www.mvpsoft.com**.   Once you are connected, go to the Station Exchange.   There you may purchase Rings of the Magi for Windows: Grand Master Edition and download it immediately.   While you are there check out the other specials in the Station Exchange, as well as download any other MVP shareware game you want from our Web Page.

Contacting MVP Software

```
Mail/Post:

    MVP Software
    P.O. Box 888281
    Grand Rapids, MI 49588-8281
    U.S.A.

Telephone:

    Orders from US and Canada: 800-968-9684 (24 hours)
    Orders from overseas:      616-831-7985 (24 hours)
    Technical Support:         616-831-7981
    Fax:                       616-831-7982

CompuServe:

    GO MVPSOFT

World Wide Web:

    www.mvpsoft.com

For additional information see the ROTM.DOC file.
```