

he masses have spoken and Ambrosia has listened. After the release of Ambrosia's puzzle game Chiral (rhymes with spiral), Ambrosia received a number of calls for help. In order to get to the fun part of Chiral, users are first confronted with a learning curve a little steeper than the point and shoot game play of Ambrosia's other popular titles.

Ambrosia's Tech. dude "Cajun" David Richard has spent a fair amount of time hosting impromptu molecular chemistry lessons on Ambrosia's online message boards. Cajun was able to take an account of the most common questions, combine that with a little bit of programming and shazam — Chiral Basics.

As an interactive tutorial, Chiral Basics combines graphics and sounds from the actual game with text instructions and tips. If you can master a mouse, you will be assembling molecules in no time. The Chiral Basics application walks you through five chapters that explain the details of Chiral's molecular construction.

After the title screen, Chiral students can choose to proceed through the chapters in order, or select them individually to study up on particular circumstances. The chapters are:

Introduction — A basic hands on introduction to the different elements of Chiral as a game. Find out what a Schzapp is, how big the playing field is and the perils of a full vial.

Molecule Basics — Chiral has more bonding than a father and son fishing trip. This chapter shows what each atom needs to be a happy atom.

Special Situations — Chiral throws an occasional curve ball at you. This chapter will show you how to get out of those atomically sticky situations.

Atoms — Not all of the atoms are happy to be working with you. Some of these guys have special attributes. Learn about them and they can work to your advantage.

Conclusion — Cajun wraps it up nicely and sends you on your way.

ere is a shot of a sample screen of Chiral Basics in action. Notice the helpful text right on the screen. The “X”’s are showing you where to go next (don’t look for these in Chiral the game). The menu in the bottom left corner allows you to toggle between chapters. The arrow buttons in the bottom right are page turners, use these gizmos to work through the different screens of each lesson.

Chiral Basics is now being bundled with Chiral the game. It is also available for download by itself for those of you who already have the game itself. Chiral was awarded first place for an entertainment program in MacUser’s 1994 Shareware Awards. It is a quality product, and can be a whole lot of fun. If you have not seen Chiral yet, you can download the bundle and try it for free today. If you already have Chiral, Chiral Basics is a handy guide on how to improve your game play.