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How To Play

The following topics explain how to play Grid War:

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Game Menu Commands

New Game

Begins a new game. You can issue this command at any time. If you choose it before completing a game, the current game is terminated and a new one is started.

Exit

Terminates the Grid War program.

Playing the Game

When you run Grid War, the program starts a game. You can later start a new game -- even before the current game is over -- by choosing the New Game command from the Game menu. At the beginning of a game, two spaceships appear within the grid: Your ship is the yellow one, located in the upper left corner. The enemy ship is the red one, located in the lower right corner.

The enemy ship pursues your ship doggedly throughout the game. Also, as soon as it begins moving within the same row or column as your ship, it fires a torpedo at you. If your ship collides with the enemy ship or is struck by one of the enemy's torpedoes, your ship is destroyed and the game is over.

Use the arrow keys in the numeric keypad (or in the stand-alone four-key arrow keypad) to maneuver your ship through the white grid. You can move only through the marked rows and columns. To fire a torpedo, press the key in the center of the numeric keypad (the 5 key). If you hit the enemy ship with a torpedo, the enemy ship is destroyed and you score 1 point. If a torpedo reaches the edge of the grid, it disappears; and if it collides with a torpedo fired by the enemy, the two torpedoes neutralize each other and vanish.

Note: A torpedo travels in a straight path at twice the speed of a spaceship. If a ship fires a torpedo, it cannot fire another one while the original torpedo is still within the playing grid.

If your ship destroys the enemy ship by colliding with it, you will score a point. This point, however, will be your last in the game -- because your ship will also be destroyed!

If you destroy the enemy ship, the program pauses for a few seconds...and then creates another enemy ship. This time, however, the ship does not necessarily appear in the lower right corner. Rather, it can arrive within any of the squares along the outside edges of the grid. It can even appear within the same square that contains your ship; in this case, the game will be over quickly. (Yes, there is an element of luck in this game.)

The game will continue in this manner as long as you keep obliterating enemy ships. The object is to defeat as many of these ships as you can. If your ship is destroyed, Grid War ends the game and displays your score, which equals the total number of enemy ships you have destroyed.

Strategy and Hints

You can defeat the first enemy ship through skill alone. However, as soon as each new enemy ship appears at a random location along the edge of the grid, luck will play an important part in your success. (In fact, if an enemy ship materializes in the square your ship is currently occupying, your ship's destruction is inescapable.)

The primary defensive strategy is to keep your ship as far in front of the enemy ship as possible. You can defend your ship against a torpedo using one of the following two strategies:

- o Make a right angle turn out of your current row or column. The torpedo will continue to move in a straight line and will miss your ship.
- o Fire one of your torpedoes directly at the approaching enemy torpedo. When the two torpedoes collide, they destroy each other. Be aware, however, that if you keep approaching the enemy while firing away, hoping to ward off all approaching torpedoes, you will lose the battle because the enemy's torpedo technology is slightly better than yours!

The only way I have found to destroy the enemy ship is to fire a torpedo at it from a direction that is at a right angle to the enemy's direction of travel. You must time the release of the torpedo so that it hits the enemy ship just as the enemy ship reaches your ship's row or column location. If you fire a bit early, you will miss the ship; if you fire a bit late, the enemy will destroy your torpedo with one of its own. The figure below shows this strategy:

