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HOW TO USE TANGAROOs

TANGAROOs™ is an educational tool that can help develop skills in pattern recognition and spatial orientation by using the concept of tangram shapes (see [History](#)). It also is a tool to promote creativity. Usually, tangram shapes are made from any number of materials that may or may not be convenient to use. With the proliferation of computers, people are finding that TANGAROOs™ is a fun and easy way to carry on the tradition of teaching with tangrams.

In keeping with these ideas, TANGAROOs™ can be used in essentially two modes: duplicate and create. Duplicate assumes that you already have a picture that you are going to build. This picture can be either in electronic form (picture file) or just on a piece of paper. From there, your job is to use the seven shapes to duplicate the picture. TANGAROOs™ has many options to help you perform this task. Not only is there a wide variety of ways the shapes can be manipulated (see [Quick Reference Guide](#)), but there are also three different skill levels (see [Options](#) menu). TANGAROOs™ is packaged with a picture file, and you can find many books in your local library that contain more tangram pictures.

A lot of adults feel that they have out-grown the idea of tangrams. That's why TANGAROOs™ was developed with a create mode. Kids and adults both will find it very rewarding and enjoyable to develop new tangram pictures. TANGAROOs™ will even let you save your creation to your very own picture file (see [File](#) menu).

That's really all there is to know to get started. HAVE FUN!

HISTORY OF TANGRAMS

No one is really sure where tangrams originated. Some sources believe it began as an ancient Chinese puzzle that was created when an old Chinese man dropped a square tile that shattered into the seven tangram shapes. He found that the shapes could be rearranged together to form an endless number of larger shapes.

Tangrams have been used throughout history in Europe and have been made especially famous in the United States by Sam Loyd. It seems that the popularity of tangrams comes and goes, but even now it is still being used as a teaching tool in many schools. You can read more about tangrams in your local library.

MENUS

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USING THE MOUSE

Selecting Shapes

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HELPFUL HINTS

Use the Mouse Help menu feature if you need a brief reminder about how to use the mouse to manipulate the shapes. Just click on the Mouse Help menu and a quick reference is displayed.

There is also a Quick Reference Guide to using the mouse and menus that you can access under the Help menu. It is helpful to print this guide and keep it handy when using TANGAROOs™.

In using TANGAROOs™, I have found that creativity can strike at any time. Therefore, you need the ability to save your creation. There is a Save Mode that allows you to do this. If you are creating a picture with the Save Mode off (not checked) and then you turn the Save Mode on, your picture will reappear on the screen (even if all seven shapes have not been used yet). At this point you should finish your picture and then choose **Save** from the File menu.

NOTE: If your creativity strikes in the Beginner or Novice skill level, your shapes will remain on the screen but will be placed within the left half of the screen and not in their current positions. Their orientation will be the same; you will just have to place them in their correct position for your picture.

Each picture file can hold up to 50 pictures. One way to build a picture file is to open a new or existing file with less than 50 pictures, activate the Save Mode option, create your new picture, and then choose **Save** from the File menu. However, you may want to transfer a picture from one file to another. This can be done using the following steps:

- 1. Open the file which holds the picture you want to transfer (by selecting Open... from the File menu).**
- 2. Select the picture to be placed on the screen (right side).**
- 3. Re-create the picture with the shapes (left side of screen).**
- 4. Activate the Save Mode option from the Options Menu.**
- 5. Choose New... from the File menu.**
- 6. Choose Save from the File menu.**
- 7. Select an existing file name where you want to store the picture. The picture will be appended to this file.**

Remember, you can not have more than 50 pictures in a single file.

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ORDERING INFORMATION

TANGAROOs™ 1.0 Registration Form/Invoice

To order, send check or money order with this order form to TANGible Software, 721 Freeman Dr., Concord, NC 28025. Payments must be in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank.

Any questions about registration options, product details, technical support, dealer pricing, site licenses, etc, should be directed to the address above or by CIS Email to Steve Deskevich at 71021,625 or Internet 71021.625@compuserve.com.

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FILE MENU COMMANDS

New

This menu command opens a new file in which to store pictures that you create. A dialog box will ask you for the new name. A default extension of .TAN will be assumed if none is given. Although you can choose any valid DOS name, it is recommended that you use the default extension in order to later identify a TANGAROOs™ picture file.

Open...

This menu command opens an existing picture file. A dialog box will show both a file and directory listing which you can use to find the appropriate file. The file listings will assume an extension of .TAN by default. You can also type the file name in the box above the file listing and press the OK button.

NOTE: This menu command only opens the picture file. To place a picture on the screen, pull down the Picture menu and click on Select...

Save...

This menu command saves the picture that is currently on the screen to a file. There are three restrictions for saving a picture: 1) Save Mode must be turned on, 2) The picture must be made from all seven shapes, and 3) The file you are saving to cannot contain more than 50 pictures.

Close

This menu command closes the current picture file.

Exit

This menu command will exit TANGAROOs™.

PICTURE MENU

Select...

This menu command allows you to select a picture from the opened picture file. A dialog box will display the pictures, allowing you to step through the file using the "+" and "-" buttons. Along with the picture, its index number within the file is shown. When you find the picture that you want, press the OK button.

NOTE: Before a picture can be selected, you must open a valid picture file by pulling down the File menu and clicking on Open... .

The Delete button is used to delete a picture from the file. This button is only active if TANGAROOs™ is started with a **/a** command line argument (for example, TANGAROO.EXE /a).

NOTE: Once the picture is deleted, it cannot be recalled.

Clear Screen

This menu command clearS the screen by erasing the selected picture and replacing all the shapes back onto the shapebar.

NOTE: To erase only the shapes and not the selected picture, see mouse command erase.

OPTIONS MENU

Skill

This menu command will bring up another menu with three skill levels (expert level is the default):

Beginner

- 1) Shapes can be placed anywhere on the white screen.
- 2) Shapes can be "dropped" on the selected picture.
- 3) The selected picture is always in the "show answer" mode (see below).

Novice

- 1) Shapes can be placed anywhere on the white screen.
- 2) Shapes can be "dropped" on the selected picture.
- 3) The selected picture is shown in black.

Expert

- 1) Shapes can only be placed on the left side of the screen they cannot be "dropped" on the selected picture).
- 2) The selected picture is shown in black on the right of the screen.

NOTE: The skill level can be changed at any point in the game. However, changing the skill level will replace all the shapes back on the shapebar.

Show Answer

This menu command allows you to see how the selected picture is put together. This option is turned off (not checked) by default.

Snap To Shape

This menu command allows you to turn shape-snapping on and off. This option is on (checked) by default. When snapping is turned on, two shapes will "snap" together if they are close enough to each other. However, only the corners of the shapes will snap together.

Sound

This menu option toggles the sound capabilities of TANGAROOs™ on and off. You must have a sound driver loaded for this option to work.

Save Mode

This menu command is used to activate the save picture capabilities. A newly created picture cannot be saved to a file unless this option is turned on (checked). When TANGAROOs™ is in this mode, you cannot select a picture. Turning this option off (not checked) will clear the screen of all shapes and pictures and return you to the expert skill level.

NOTE: See [Helpful Hints](#) for more information.

FLIP PARALLELOGRAM

This command does not have a menu associated with it. This command allows you to "flip" (i.e., mirror image) the parallelogram shape once it is on the screen.

MOUSE HELP MENU

This menu contains a quick reference to help you use the mouse to manipulate the shapes. This is a reference feature only; there are no selections available within this menu.

HELP MENU

Index

This menu option will start the help program and displays a list of topics to view.


Quick Reference


This menu option will start the help program and displays a quick reference guide to using the mouse and the menus.

About TANGAROOs™

This menu option will bring up information about the TANGAROOs™ program including the version number and the copyright information.

SELECTING SHAPES

Use the shape-bar  to access the shapes that are used to build pictures. Select a shape by placing the mouse cursor over one of the shape buttons and **clicking the left mouse button**. This will place the shape on the screen where you can drag, rotate, erase, or color the shapes black.

Once a shape has been selected  the shape's button will indicate that it cannot be used again. Therefore, all pictures are made from exactly seven shapes.

NOTE: Each shape can only be used once. You must use all seven shapes to create a picture.

DRAGGING SHAPES

Once a shape has been selected and is on the screen, you move it into position by dragging. To drag a shape, do the following:

- 1) Place the cursor over the shape on the screen.
- 2) **Click and hold the left mouse button.**
- 3) Move the mouse until the shape is where you want it.
- 4) Release the left mouse button and the shape will be "dropped" onto the screen.

After the shape has been "dropped", you can drag, rotate, erase, or color the shapes black.

If the snap to shape option is checked on the menu, the shape that you are dragging and dropping will "snap" to another shape on the screen if they are close enough.

ROTATING SHAPES

To build pictures, it is sometimes necessary to rotate the shapes to get them in the correct position. You can rotate shapes in both clockwise and counter-clockwise directions as follows:

Clockwise

- 1) Place the cursor over the shape on the screen.
- 2) **Click the right mouse button.**

Counter-Clockwise

- 1) Place the cursor over the shape on the screen.
- 2) **Click the left mouse button.**

Counter-clockwise rotation may be tricky at first. It is important to keep the mouse still when clicking the left mouse button.

NOTE: In addition to rotating a parallelogram, you may have to flip the shape to get it in the right position.

ERASING SHAPES

Sometimes it will be necessary to erase a shape from the screen. You can erase a single shape or all of them at the same time as follows:

Erase Single Shape

- 1) Place the cursor over the shape on the screen.
- 2) **Hold down the Shift key and click the right mouse**

button.

Erase All Shapes at Once

- 1) **Hold down the Ctrl key and click the right mouse**

button.

In both cases, the shape will be erased from the screen and its shape button will be active again. The shape will then have to be selected again before it can be used.

COLORING SHAPES BLACK

When building a picture, it helps to color all the shapes on the screen black to compare them to the picture you selected. This is done by **holding down the Shift key and clicking the left mouse button**. Shapes can be returned to their original colors by the same method.

NOTE: You cannot move the shapes on the screen until you return them to their original color).

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Using The Mouse

- Select Shape bar -- Single click left mouse button with cursor on shape bar
- Drag Shape shape -- Click and hold left mouse button with cursor on then move mouse
- Rotate Right shape -- Single click right mouse button with cursor on shape
- Rotate Left -- Single click left mouse button with cursor on shape
- Erase A Shape button -- Hold down shift key then single click right mouse with cursor on the shape
- Erase All Shapes mouse button -- Hold down Ctrl key then single click right
- Color Shapes Black -- Hold down shift key then single click left mouse button
(same action will return shapes to original colors)

Using The Menus

- File New -- Creates a new file to hold pictures that are created
(Alt+F+N)
- File Open -- Opens an existing picture file **(Alt+F+O)**
- File Save -- Saves a picture file **(Alt+F+S)**
- File Close -- Closes the currently opened picture file **(Alt+F+C)**
- File Exit -- Exits TANGAROOs™ **(Alt+F+X)**
- Picture Select opened -- Allows you to select a picture from the currently opened file **(Alt+P+S)**

Picture Clear Screen -- Replaces all shapes to the shape bar and erases the selected picture from the screen (**Alt+P+C**)

Options Skill -- Allows you to choose skill level (**Alt+O+K**)

Options Show Answer -- Toggles solution viewing on and off (**Alt+O+S**)

Options Snap To Shape -- Toggles shape snapping on and off (**Alt+O+N**)

Options Sound -- Toggles sound capabilities on and off (**Alt+O+O**)

Options Save Mode -- When checked, allows you to save a picture to a file (**Alt+O+A**)

Flip Parallelogram --Flips parallelogram shape after it has been selected (**Alt+L**)

Help Index -- Starts help program showing the index of topics (**F1**)

Help Quick Reference -- Starts help program showing the quick reference (**Alt+H+Q**)

Help About -- Shows information about TANGAROOs™ (**Alt+H+A**)

