Connect Four v1.0.2
by Berrie Kremers

Connect Four (Vier op een Rij) is a board game for two players. I started developing this on a Sun Workstation without any user-interface, because a collegue of me had made a version of this game in Prolog and I thought I could do this better in C. This version played pretty good, allthough it couldn't beat my friend Mark, the local Vier op een Rij guru. By tuning the algorithm, I came to a program that could do up to 800000 evaluations per minute, which I myself found impressing. Somewhat later, I started porting the game to my home Macintosh, which wasn't to hard, because it was still small. The hardest task was creating a good user-interface for the program. I did so in the summer of last year, up to a certain point where I got bored of it all. Two months ago (don't know why) I picked it up again, and kind of started all over again. This resulted in me sitting behind my Mac every evening, and the game being finished now (version 1.0.2 at least).

The rules of the game are simple. In turn both players may drop one stone in the box. The one who gets 4 stones of his color connected in a vertical, diagonal or horizontal row, wins the game. A draw is possible, when the box is filled completely and no player connected four stones.

In this version of Connect Four, you can play somebody else, the Macintosh, or let the computer play itself. The strength of the computer can be set. Of course finding a move will take longer when the computer plays 'better'. It depends on the kind of Macintosh you have to find a good search depth. On my Classic, depth 4 is nice.

For more help on the game and its possibilities, turn on Balloon Help.

Connect Four should run on all kinds of Macintoshes. Various features of System 7 are implemented, such as Balloon Help, Background Processing, and the recognition of HighLevel Events. When you run an older system, you cannot save or open games, and there is no animation of falling stones (v1.0 ran only under System 7, but a swedish guy convinced me that this was not the right way, so I made a quick compromise where I just disabled all the System 7 features for older system versions). When I say that it should run an all Macs, understand that I do not guarantee this, and that I will take no responsibility if it crashes and you lose work (you should have saved it before anyway). I have been testing on some other kinds of machines, but not deeply. There might be problems on color machines (for now I think not), allthough I think I have programmed every thing in a nice and clean way. And if there are enough people out there who like this and will pay me the shareware fee, I can invest this in a color Macintosh (if my grilfriend allows me), which will enable me to test my next development (if any) properly. I have had a report from someone with a Quadra 900,

who couldn't run this game.

Connect Four is Shareware, if you like it, send $10 to:

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You can also get the sources if you like, in that case send me $20 (for the extra's you get, for the floppy and for the postage). If I get enough requests for this, I might even think of documenting the code properly.

Problems, bugs, suggestions, recommendations, errors in my English etc. can be sent to the same address, even if you don't like the game and you don't like to pay. I can also be reached through e-mail (and I prefer this), the address is:

       berrie@kub.nl

And that's it for now, because I have to make dinner again.