

# Tetris Help Index

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The Index lists all Tetris Help topics. Scroll to see more entries.

To learn how to use Help, choose Using Help from the Help menu, or press F1.

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[Keyboard](#)

## Overview

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Tetris is an exciting action game. Throughout the game, [Tetris pieces](#) fall from the top to the bottom of the playing area. When the Tetris pieces form a solid row of [blocks](#) across the playing area, that row vanishes.

Because this is the only way to remove blocks, you should try to form solid rows whenever possible. The game ends when the pieces stack up to the top of the playing area.

You can manipulate a piece only when it is falling. Falling pieces may be rotated, moved horizontally, or dropped to the bottom of the playing area.

## Related Topics

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- ◆ [Playing the Game](#)
- ◆ [Rules of the Game](#)
- ◆ [Scoring](#)

## Playing the Game

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The object of Tetris is to continue playing for as long as possible. The game is over when the playing area is stacked to the top with [Tetris pieces](#). The following section explains how to play the game.

### To Choose a Skill Level:

- From the Skill menu, choose a starting level from 1 to 10. The higher the level, the faster the pieces fall.

### To Start a New Game:

- From the Game menu, choose New, or press F2.

### To Move a Piece Horizontally:

- Use the appropriate [keyboard](#) controls. You can move the [current piece](#) either left or right.

**Note:** If the current piece is close to the borders or close to already-positioned pieces, you may be unable to move it.

### To Rotate a Piece:

- Use the appropriate keyboard controls. You can rotate the current piece 90 degrees counterclockwise.

**Note:** If the current piece is close to the borders or close to already-positioned pieces, you may be unable to rotate it.

### To Drop a Piece:

- Use the appropriate keyboard controls. When you drop a piece, it falls rapidly until it lands on a stationary piece or the bottom of the playing area.

### To Pause a Game:

- From the Game menu, choose Pause, or press F3.

**Note:** To resume the game, choose Pause again, or press F3.

## Related Topics

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- ◆ [Rules of the Game](#)
- ◆ [Overview](#)
- ◆ [Keyboard](#)

## Rules of the Game

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### Tetris Rules:

- Tetris pieces appear one at a time at the top of the playing area and then proceed to fall at a constant speed.
- Each piece continues to fall until it lands on another piece or the bottom of the playing area.
- You can manipulate a piece only when it is falling.
- With the keyboard, you can rotate a falling piece and move it left, right, or down.
- Each time there is a solid row of blocks across the playing area, that row vanishes. Try to manipulate the pieces as they fall so that solid rows form and disappear.
- The game ends when the pieces are stacked to the top of the playing area. In a two-player game, the loser is the person whose game ends first.

### Related Topics

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- ◆ [Playing the Game](#)
- ◆ [Strategy and Hints](#)

## Scoring

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The current piece starts with an initial score value, which increases for each successive playing level. Each time you rotate the piece or move it horizontally, its score value decreases. If you drop the piece, its score value increases proportionally to the distance it falls. Therefore, you can achieve the highest score per piece by immediately dropping the piece from the top of the playing area. The lowest score per piece will result when you continually manipulate the piece until it lands on another piece or the bottom of the playing area.

**Note:** Using the Piece Preview command from the Options menu dramatically lowers the score value of every piece. It is a helpful learning tool, but once you have gained experience, you should turn this command off.

You can earn bonus points by removing multiple rows of blocks simultaneously.

One Row	100 points
Two Rows	200 points
Three Rows	400 points
Four Rows	800 points

## Related Topics

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- ◆ [Strategy and Hints](#)
- ◆ [Keyboard](#)

## Game Menu Commands

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### **New**

Starts a new game of Tetris.

You can start a new game at any time, even in the middle of a game.

### **Pause**

Pauses the current game.

### **High Scores**

Displays the table of Tetris Experts.

### **Exit**

Exits Tetris.

You can exit at any time, even in the middle of a game.

## Skill Menu Commands

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### Starting Level

Sets the skill level of a new game. The higher the level, the greater the speed at which the pieces fall.

### Starting Rows

Starts a new game with rows of randomly scattered pieces. The greater the number of rows, the more difficult the game. You can start with up to nine rows.

## Options Menu Commands

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### Sound

Turns sound on or off.

### 1 Player

Selects a one-player game.

### 2 Player

Selects a two-player game.

### Penalize Other Player

Available only in two-player mode.

Adds penalty rows to an opponent's game.

### Piece Preview

Available only in one-player mode.

Turns on the Piece Preview feature. A check mark beside the command name indicates it is active.

### Track High Scores

Records high scores as they are achieved. A check mark next to this command indicates it is active.



# Keyboard

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Key	Action
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## One Player or Right Player in a Two-Player Game

<a href="#">UP ARROW</a> or Num Pad 5	Rotates the <u>current piece</u>
<a href="#">LEFT ARROW</a>	Moves the current piece left
<a href="#">RIGHT ARROW</a>	Moves the current piece right
<a href="#">DOWN ARROW</a> or <a href="#">INS</a>	Drops the current piece to the bottom

## Left Player in a Two-Player Game

<a href="#">K</a>	Rotates the current piece
<a href="#">J</a>	Moves the current piece left
<a href="#">L</a>	Moves the current piece right
<a href="#">SPACEBAR</a>	Drops the current piece to the bottom

### General Keys

<a href="#">ESC</a>	Minimizes the Tetris window to an icon
<a href="#">F1</a>	Opens the Help Index
<a href="#">F2</a>	Starts a new game
<a href="#">F3</a>	Pauses or resumes the game

## Related Topics

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- ◆ [Playing the Game](#)
- ◆ [Game Menu Commands](#)

## How To Play

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This section contains information about how to play Tetris.

[Overview](#)

[Playing the Game](#)

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# Commands

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This section contains information about the menu commands in Tetris.

[Game Menu Commands](#)

[Skill Menu Commands](#)

[Options Menu Commands](#)

## Strategy and Hints

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This section contains helpful hints for playing Tetris successfully.

- Use the [Piece Preview](#) command from the Options menu to gain experience, and then turn it off for higher scoring.
- Avoid building "mountains." Try to keep the pile of [pieces](#) level at the top.
- Avoid creating "canyons" that are one block wide and many blocks deep. You may find yourself nervously waiting for the long, skinny piece (which never seems to appear when you need it).
- Always try to leave a "flat spot" at least three [blocks](#) wide along the top of the stacked pieces. This way you can drop most of the pieces without leaving any gaps.
- Sometimes it is to your advantage to leave a gap and go on to the next level. If you can make the next level disappear, you may have time to fill the gap afterwards.
- Once a piece lands on another piece, it can still be manipulated for a very short time. You can use this time to "slide" the piece under an "overhang."

## Related Topics

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- ◆ [Playing the Game](#)
- ◆ [Scoring](#)

## Penalty Rows

In a two-player game, when one player clears two or more rows, an equivalent number of **penalty rows** is added to the opposing player's game.

## **Current Piece**

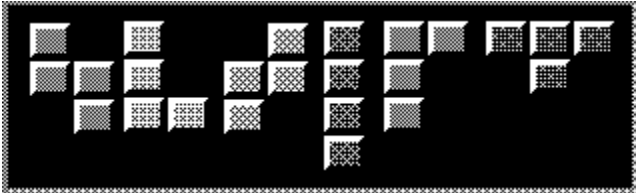
The **current piece** is the piece which is falling at any point in the game. This is the only piece the player can manipulate.

## **Piece Preview**

The next piece is displayed in the score box, under the title, "Next." Scoring is reduced when the **Piece Preview** command is turned on.

# Tetris Pieces

There are six different Tetris pieces:





## Tetris Blocks

All Tetris pieces are constructed out of **Tetris blocks**.

