

in

COLLABORATORS

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WRITTEN BY		July 19, 2024	

REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

in

1.1 MAIN

CyberGfx Patience. ©1995 by E. Lensink

Disclaimer	- NO WARRANTY
Distribution	- IMPORTANT
What is it	- About the game
Rules	- Getting started
How to use it	- Configuration & controls
System requirements	- What you need
Troubleshooting	- If it doesn't work
Known bugs	- Misfeatures
Graphics file format	- DIY Cardset
To do	- The future ?
Author	- Me !!
Postware	- Postcards
History	- Revisions
The future	- What's next

1.2 Disclaimer

Disclaimer:

This software comes 'as-is', so no warranties whatsoever. I (the author) have done everything to create a reliable and stable program, but if this program spontaneously decides to format your Ferrari, erase your neighbours, or cause any other damage or loss ... I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE !! You use this software at your own risk!

1.3 Distribution

Distribution:

This game is freely (re)distributable, as long as all files are kept together. It may not be sold for profit, only a reasonable copying fee may be charged (reasonable is about \$5). It is allowed to put this game on CD-ROM's and BBS's, as long as no more than \$1 per megabyte is charged. Magazines may try to fit this on their coverdisks (though I doubt it...) and Fred Fish is explicitly allowed to put this game on one of his Fresh Fish CD's.

1.4 What is it

What is it:

CyberGfx Patience is the so-manieth patience/klondike/solitaire kind of game. It's inspired by Klondike DeLuxe AGA (by REKO Productions). I made this version because I wanted to play a good patience game on my GFX-board equipped amiga, and because I thought it might be a good idea to write a 24 bit game for CyberGfx and be the first to do it :)

1.5 Rules

Rules:

Basically Patience is just a very hard way of sorting your cards. In the top area of the screen you see 7 stacks of cards, each with only one card visible. In the bottom area of the screen are the rest of your pack of cards, in random order. Clicking on this 'pile' results in one (easy mode) or 3 (hard mode) cards being taken from the pile and displayed next to it. This card can then be moved to one of the 7 stacks of cards if it's one less in value than the topmost visible card on the stack, and has a different color. Example: A red queen may be put on a black king, a black 6 may be put on a red 7, but you may not put a black 8 on a red 7 or a black 8 on a black 9. In the bottom right area of the screen there are four empty places reserved; this is where you store your sorted cards. Putting a card away is done by doubleclicking on it.

Well... that's a very short explanation covering the basics of the game, and I hope it will be sufficient to get you started. Happy playing!

1.6 How to use it

How to use it:

Choosing which cardset to use:

You can specify the filename of a cardset using the CARDS=<name> tooltip. If not specified the program tries to read a file 'default.bmp' in the current directory.

Setting memory requirements:

Usually the game requires about 3.6 Mb Fast ram to work properly, but if you specify the LOWMEM tooltype memory requirements magically drop to about 1.6 Mb. If this amount of memory is still not available then the game will not allocate memory for the card caching system reducing memory requirements even further to about 1.2 Mb.

Low-memory mode operates by NOT reading the complete cardset in memory all at once, but instead loading a card when it's required. For this mode of operation a fast harddrive is recommended.

Choosing a 16 bit (64K colors) display to save memory:

As a default the game tries to open a 24 bit screen. In 16 bit color the game uses somewhat less memory (about 300k :) and looks nearly as good. You can activate the 16 bit mode by specifying the 16BIT tooltype.

Playing the game on the workbench:

You can force the game to open it's screen on the workbench by specifying the WORKBENCH tooltype. This puts some restrictions on your workbench screen's screenmode:

- It must be 16 or 24 bit deep.
- It must be AT LEAST 650 x 512 (depending on screen font) pixels big.

I'm playing the game in 16 bit mode and I don't want to use the 'bob' pointer:

To overcome the 3-pointers bug in CyberGfx I've written my own (flickery) pointer routines. If you want to deactivate those and get the sprite pointer back, specify the NOPOINTERPATCH tooltype.

Keyboard commands:

During play you can use the following keys:

- [ESC] - Escape, quits the game
- [F1] - F1, restarts the game ... very useful if you get stuck
- [F9] - F9, Activate 'easy' gameplay mode
- [F10] - F10, Activate 'hard' gameplay mode (default)
- [HELP]- Shows some information about the program
- [R] - 'R', Redraws the screen

Mouse commands:

All card-moving actions are controlled using the mouse and the left mouse button. Moving cards is done by clicking on the 'from' cards and then clicking on the 'to' cards.

Doubleclicking on a stack of cards checks if the topmost card can be 'put away' and does so if possible. This also works on the pile of cards in the bottom left area of the screen.

1.7 System requirements

System Requirements:

System requirements:

- AMIGA
- Wb 3.0 or better
- 68020 or better
- At least 1.2 Mb free FAST ram for low-memory mode (0.9Mb if 16Bit mode) or,
- At least 3.6 Mb free FAST ram for normal operation
- CyberGraphics V40 or better
- A suitable graphics board, capable of displaying 640x480 pixels in 16M colors
- About 3 Mb free harddisk space for full installation, and about 2.4 Mb extra for any additional cardsets

This program was developed and tested using the following equipment and software:

- A3000, 2 Mb CHIP, 12 Mb FAST
- Piccolo Z3 GFX Board
- ImageFX 2.0
- Reko.datatype (for conversion of cardsets to .BMP format)

1.8 Troubleshooting

Troubleshooting:

Problem	Possible cause
- the game won't load, displaying an out-of-memory error in the WB title bar.	You really need more memory. Try closing unneeded tasks and windows and try again. Rebooting might help.
- The game opens it's screen and immediately after closes it and quits.	A: The game could not find any of it's datafiles. Check the spelling in the Tooltypes. B: You have not enough memory. Try setting the LOWMEM tooltype...
- The game crashes completely...	Hmmm.... too bad. You could write me a nice complaining letter stating what you were doing to get the game to crash, and that you would like to see it fixed.
- The display slightly corrupts	Can happen... press the 'R' key to redraw the screen.

1.9 Known bugs

Known bugs:

- If a requester opens the mouse pointer suddenly becomes 3 mouse pointers.
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This is not a bug in my game, but in CyberGfx's 24 bit mode. I've partially solved the problem by using a bob-like mouse pointer while you are playing.

- If a stack of cards grows too big it corrupts other parts of the screen. I'm aware of this problem... just press 'R' to redraw the screen.
- The game uses so much memory I cant't do anything else while the game is running...
This is not a bug... it's a feature :) Doing other things while you are playing distracts you from the game, and this prevents it :)
SERIOUS: This is a 24 bit application and these just tend to use a load of memory... sad, but it just isn't different.

1.10 Graphics file format

Graphics file format:

The game reads standard uncompressed Windows(TM)-type 24 bit BMP images. No checking is performed on the validity of the supplied graphics file since the worst thing that can happen is a corrupted display.

If you want to make your own cardset you can use the supplied template (template.bmp) and edit it. ImageFX and ADPro are able to read and write BMP images.

If you have both the reko.datatype (by ???) and ImageFX you can just load a Klondike AGA DeLuxe .reko cardset and save it out as BMP.

1.11 To do

Future plans:

Things which MIGHT be implemented in a future release of CyberGfx Patience:

- Direct reading of REKO cardsets (via the datatype)
- Faster card loader in LOWMEM mode
- Better card caching system in LOWMEM mode
- Perhaps an EGS version (don't count on it... I don't like EGS, but if I get enough requests I might consider writing it)

Things already implemented since release 1.00:

- Reduced memory requirements in normal mode (1.02)
- No card caching system in normal mode (currently 'loads' the cards from the ram buffer, and uses the card caching anyway... silly eh?) (1.02)

1.12 Author

Author:

I'm a 19 (born 1975) years old telematics student, living in Holland. One of my hobbies is programming my amiga though I hardly ever release any programs. Other programs made by me, and available through AMINET are:

- The Guru v3.0 (programmer's debugging aid)
- Exit16 v2.0 (puzzle game written in AMOS :))

My address is:

Emiel Lensink
Notengarde 33
3992 JR, Houten
Holland

E-Mail: zamorra@dds.nl
prlwytz@dds.nl

1.13 Postware

Postware:

This game is postware, so if you like it please send me a postcard of your hometown. Other things (like gifts, money, disks, 060 boards) will be gratefully accepted too. My address can be found in 'Author'.

1.14 History

Revision history:

- Version 1.00 (20-Jul-1995) - Finished this version only 6 days after I received my registered CyberGfx.
- Version 1.01 (23-Jul-1995) - Added NOPOINTERPATCH tooltype
- Added WORKBENCH tooltype
- Added 16BIT tooltype
- Fixed a small bug in card loader
- Version 1.02 (08-Aug-1995) Had some bad dreams about the memory requirements of the game, so I this is what happened:
- In normal mode the game now uses 400K less memory (now 3.6Mb instead of (about) 4.1Mb)
- In low-memory mode, if no memory is available for card caching, drops memory requirement with 400k automagically, leaving only a meagre 1.2Mb ram needed for operation.
(now 1.6Mb with cache, and 1.2Mb without cache)
- In 24Bit mode and with the pointerpatch enabled, the pointer flickered horribly... fixed!
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1.15 Future

What's next:

As you can see in the Revision History the main part of this game was written in only 6 days of time, in assembly code. I have not taken the time back then to optimize the code and clean up the mess I created. I have fixed part of this in the 1.02 version, but not much :)

Currently I'm working on 3 projects:

- A new version of this game, imaginatively (?) called 'CyberGfx Patience 2' which will feature:
 - Cool & optimized code!
 - Better user interface
 - Clever card caching system
 - Uses less memory
 - Has its own file format & converter (bmp2cpc) for ultrafast card loading in low-memory mode, and a slight speed increase in normal mode.

 - Guitools.library: A taglist based library for the creation of font-sensitive user interfaces.

 - ?? : A new (and my own) programming language. I haven't thought of a name for it yet, but it's gonna be a pretty speedy language.
Features include:
 - Compiler written in Pascal, for cross-system portability (now you can create Amiga programs on your Pentium120 for speedy compilation)
 - Small & fast exeutables, not a 4K 'Hello world' but a less-than-750-bytes 'Hello world'
 - Easy to understand, yet still pretty close to the machine.
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