

MacTriv v3.2

Documentation

Welcome to the all new version 3.2 of MacTriv. This game has been completely rewritten from scratch in C and incorporates a completely new user interface, a new enhanced extensible file format, and a much better editor. Important features at a glance:

- Completely free. No shareware fee required!
- Works on all Mac models (requires System 6.0.2 or greater).
- System 7 compatible.
- Excellent colour graphics on colour capable machines.
- Extensible file format allows custom questions files.
- Built-in Question Editor
- Written in THINK C 5.0.

If you are familiar with the original version of MacTriv and the colour MacTriv II that I wrote a few years ago, you will find that the new version has much better graphics, and the game play has been improved too. But best of all, the new version is completely free! So copy it as much as you like, and give it to your friends- you don't have to pay me a penny for my efforts. However, I do appreciate a card from your home town if you feel like dropping me a line, as I like to see how far my software travels! Please keep this documentation with any copies you make.

Running MacTriv 3.2

To install MacTriv 3.2, simply drag it and the questions file to your hard disk, or if you prefer, just run it from the floppy disk on which you obtained it. To run, double-click the MacTriv application- it's icon looks like a die. When MacTriv loads, it looks for a questions file called "TrivQuestions" in the same folder as the application. If it can't find it, you will get an error message when the first question is looked for. You can select a file to be used as the questions file by choosing "Open Questions" from the File menu. This allows you to swap files at any point during the game.

Playing MacTriv 3.2

When you run MacTriv 3.2, the first thing you need to do is to set the number of players and enter their names. Select "New Game" from the Game menu to bring up the Players dialog box. Each player is assigned a colour on colour Macs, and clicking the coloured square adjacent to the player's name brings up a pop-up menu for setting the colour. Every game must have at least one player, which is why there is no way to deselect player 1!

MacTriv 3.2 has seperate windows for the board, the dice and the 'wedges' racks, unlike the previous versions, which crammed everything into a single window. The

board is a rectangular matrix of picture squares, each representing a category of question, or a 'throw again' square. If you are unsure of what category each picture represents, clicking the square pops up the name of the category for that square. Game play commences by clicking the dice. The appropriate window is automatically brought to the front during play as required. After throwing the dice, you move around the board either horizontally or vertically. Diagonal moves are not allowed. To choose a direction, simply click in the same row or column as you are currently in, in the direction that you wish to move. For example, if you want to move to the right, click to the right of your current position. Each player has a counter which has the initial letter of the player's name on it, and the player's colour on colour Macs. The counter of the player whose turn it is blinks on and off while that player's turn is in progress.

If you land on 'throw again', click the dice to throw them as before. When you land on any other square, a question of the particular category is fetched from the file, and you are asked this question. All questions are in multiple choice form, and you respond by clicking the button A,B or C. If you are really stuck, there is also a 'Pass' button. If you answer correctly, play continues by clicking the dice. If you do not answer correctly, or pass, or fail to answer the question within the time limit, then the correct answer is shown, and play passes to the next player.

One square in each category is specially marked as a 'wedge' question. If you land on this square, you will hear a special sound if you do not have the wedge for that category already, and you are asked the question as before. Correctly answering this question results in you being awarded a 'wedge' in your wedge rack.

To win the game, you must obtain all six wedges by visiting all the 'wedge' squares and correctly answering the question. Then you have to answer the 'special category' question correctly. When you land on this square, you are asked a question in the category you are least good at. This is determined by the number of incorrect answers given for a particular category.

Once the game has been won, you will see a special winners screen, and then no more play can occur until "New Game" is selected from the Game menu. The last ten MacTriv winners are recorded and can be displayed by selecting "Last Ten Winners" from the Windows menu.

Other features.

During play, you can obtain more information about a player's performance by opening the info window for that player. This shows which 'wedges' the player possesses, and a record of the number of correct or incorrect questions answered in each category. To open these windows, choose the window for the required player from the Windows menu, or you can click on the appropriate wedge holder in the Wedges window. If you wish to change the name or colour of any player without resetting the game, you can do this directly in the Wedges or Info windows. To change colour (colour Macs only), click on the name panel, and the pop-up menu for choosing a colour will appear. To change the name, option-click on the name, and type in a new one. This works just like the System 7 Finder for editing names. Press Return or Enter to finish editing, or click anywhere outside the name rectangle to cancel the edit operation.

In the normal game, there is a time limit imposed to answer a particular question. You can change the duration of the timer by choosing "Preferences" from the Game menu. A setting of 'Normal' gives you about 10 seconds to answer the question, 'Genius' is about 3 seconds, and 'Dimwit' about 20 seconds. You can also turn the timer off, which gives you as much time as you want! This dialog also allows you to customise a number of the game's parameters. The board style can be set to one of four styles on a colour Mac- black & white Mac owners have Hobson's Choice, I'm afraid. Also, the way a 'wedge' square is shown on the board can be set to either a little 'wedge' icon, or to having a heavy border around the square, or both.

As everyone has their own names for the little coloured wedges- I've called them 'wedges' here, but they are variously known as 'Pies', 'Cheeses', 'Cakes' etc. -to accommodate this personal preference, you can choose one of the common names from the menu, or type in your own by choosing "Other...". This name is used wherever the 'wedges' are referred to during the game.

You can also set the speed of the blinking counter to slow, medium or fast (this also affects the rate that counters are moved around the board), and turn the zooming effect on or off.

MacTriv 3.2 Editor.

As with MacTriv II, the questions editor is built in to the game, but has been much enhanced. The new file format is supported by the new editor, but the old file format can still be read and edited by the version 3.2 editor, although the new format permits a number of additional file editing operations. The new file format was devised for two reasons- a) the old format is extremely wasteful of disk space as it consists basically of fixed size Pascal records, each of which has to be large enough to contain the longest question. In fact this is a compromise, as questions longer than 72 characters and answers longer than 32 characters are truncated to fit into the records. b) The old format can't be efficiently random accessed, and therefore useful facilities such as shuffling the cards can't be performed. MacTriv 3.2 contains utility functions to convert old files or plain text files into the new format. The new format also has additional information to allow custom graphics, etc. to be installed as resources.

To open the editor, select "Question Editor" from the Game menu. The editor will open with the first question of the current file displayed. If the file is an old type, you will get a message reminding you of the benefits of the new format, and suggesting you convert it, but if you really want to persist with editing the old files, it will let you! Navigating through the questions is simple- just click on the arrowed buttons. You can step singly (single arrows) or in tens (double arrows) or go to the end or beginning of the file (arrow and bar). To add a question to the file, click "Add"- this is always added at the end of the file. To delete a question, click "Delete". This can only be done on new format files. The question is marked as deleted, but is not actually removed from the file until the file is saved. This allows you to change your mind about deleting! To undelete, or to remove a question just added, click "Undo". If you prefer, menu commands exist for these functions. To update the file, click "Save". If you try to close the editor without saving and there are changes pending, then you will be asked if you want to save the file at this point. Note that for old files, the file records are changed directly by the editor, and are therefore not undoable, and the Save command is not required. Another

good reason for using the new format...

New format files can be shuffled. This is done permanently on a file via the editor. To shuffle the cards, choose "Shuffle Cards" from the game menu. The cards are shuffled and the shuffled file should then be saved to make the changes permanent.

Custom Attributes Editor

This editor allows you to install custom resources into a questions file. Three types are installable: new graphics for the board; different category names; and different colours for the categories. To open the attributes editor, select "Customise..." from the file menu. The attributes for the current open file are displayed. Choosing a category from the list (by clicking on it) shows the current name and colour, and any custom graphic that may be installed already. Simply edit the name directly by typing a new one, and choose a colour from the pop-up menu. To install a PICT resource as a graphic for the selected category, create the graphic using a paint program, then copy it to the clipboard, or save it as a PICT file. This is a standard operation and every paint program should support this. Clicking 'Paste PICT' will install the PICT on the clipboard as the category graphic, or you can import any PICT file by clicking 'Import...'. Ideally, the graphic should be 74 x 74 pixels square, but other sizes will be scaled to fit this size. Large PICT's can take up considerable amounts of memory, and increase the file size quite dramatically. You must set the check boxes for the types of custom resources that you are installing. When you have set everything up, click 'Install' to place the resources into the file. You can add a copyright or info message to your questions file that will be displayed in the 'Info' section of the 'About MacTriv...' dialog box. To add a message, you must already have some custom items installed so that the file's resource fork is opened, then click "©Message..." to display a simple editor for adding the text. Simply type in your text, adding any styles you wish using the menus, then click OK.

Converting a Text File

MacTriv 3.2 can convert a plain text file into a questions file, but this file must be laid out in a particular way. Sections are delimited by the return character, so each section must be on a separate line. On the first line, there must be two numbers, separated by at least one space. The first is the category of the question, from 0 to 5. The second is which of the three answers is right, 1, 2 or 3. The next line should contain the text of the question. The next three lines should contain the text of the three answers. The next question follows immediately on the next line. Do not leave empty lines. Here is an example of a typical text file layout:

```
0 2
```

```
Which London street is associated with Sweeney Todd?
```

```
The Strand
```

```
Fleet Street
```

```
Piccadilly
```

```
1 1
```

```
Which continent does Lake Titicaca beautify?
```

```
South America
```

```
Africa
```

Australia

etc...

What's New in 3.2?

Version 3.2 is an upgraded version of MacTriv which addresses a number of requests made by the playing (if not the paying) public. Small screen Mac owners will be pleased to know that finally the 13" monitor elitism displayed by the previous versions has finally been dealt with. An additional pop-up menu in the preferences dialog now allows you to optimise the window arrangement for different monitors. This will be a boon to LC owners with the 12" colour screen, as well as Classic Mac owners. The entire set of windows are resized and repositioned with graphics drawn appropriately to suit the monitor arrangement.

Some people have pointed out that spotting the question being asked can be a little difficult at first, and so now there is an option to print the question 'teletype' fashion before the answers are shown. To turn on this option, check the box in the preferences dialog. When unchecked, the old method is used, which is faster and probably less annoying for seasoned trivia addicts!

Version 3.2 allows you to save and restore a game in progress. All the attributes of the players are saved, including the chosen name, colour, current score, etc. Simply choose Load Game or Save Game from the Game menu.

The top-ten players record can be cleared by holding down command + option while choosing "The Last Ten Winners..." menu item. You are asked if you are sure.

The menus have been slightly rearranged in this version to make them a little more logical!

A note about locked volumes...

MacTriv saves some game parameters between sessions as resources in its own resource fork. This means that if you try to run MacTriv from a locked volume, such as a write-protected floppy or a CD-ROM, these parameters will not be updated. This affects window position, top-ten data and preferences settings. No error is reported to the user under these conditions. If this is a problem, copy MacTriv to a hard disk or writable floppy disk before playing.

... and Memory...

MacTriv uses offscreen graphics techniques to provide rapid board redraws and animation. The offscreen image is set up to the same 'depth' i.e. number of colours, as the main screen. For 256 colours or less, the amount of memory allocated to MacTriv is perfectly adequate, but if you are running the game in Thousands or Millions of colours, you will need to increase the memory allocation to avoid ending up with a blank board. Select MacTriv in the Finder and choose 'Get Info'. Set the memory setting to about 1000K for these screen configurations. The normal setting for MacTriv should be 500 -

600K.

And finally...

As mentioned, this game is completely free, but I do get something of a kick from receiving the odd card from America, Japan, Germany, Sutton Coldfield.. you name it. So if you like this game, drop me a line. I would also be very grateful to receive any files of questions you have created, as typing in the little b*****s takes quite a while, and I know all the answers, so I don't get the benefit of playing my own game! My present address is:

Graham Cox,
6, Hellesdon Mews,
Hellesdon Mill Lane,
Norwich,
NR6 5DA
UNITED KINGDOM

Enjoy MacTriv 3.2, I look forward to hearing from you...