Joust - (c)1996-1998 by Gerry Quinn

Joust is a simple game which requires Windows 3.1+ or better, running on an IBM PC or compatible with 80386 or better processor.

You can run it simply by clicking on the program name (in File Manager), or else you can set up a program item for it.   To do this, select New Program Item from the Windows menu, and browse until you find "Joust.exe".   With Windows 95, you can add it to the taskbar in a similar fashion.

Instructions for Joust

In this game each player has a Knight which moves as in Chess.   However, once a piece has moved, the square it was previously on cannot be entered again by either player.   The Knights cannot capture each other.   The object is to leave your opponent without any moves.

To move, place the mouse pointer on the square you want to move to, and click the left button. Only legal moves will be accepted.   White always moves first.

Joust can be played against five different levels of computer opponent, or by two human players. In the case of a two player game, players must alternate using the mouse.   The window caption will remind you of whose turn it is.

Strategy Hints for Joust

At the start, try to stay in the centre of the board and force your opponent to the edges.   Try to keep several moves available.   Conversely, try to cut down on the possible moves available to your opponent.

Towards the end of the game, you will have to consider long sequences of moves. Carefully count the number of moves each Knight can make before it runs out of squares.   Sometimes each Knight will have an separate area of remaining squares to itself, at other times they may both end up in a single zone.   In the latter case, the Knight that moves when both Knights are on the same colour will have an advantage.

In case you wondered about the computer's strategy... The Gorilla moves at random.   The Peasant just knows to keep moves available and block you.   The Knight, the Baron and the King can both think many moves ahead, but the Baron and King can cope with more different lines of play.

Instructions for Knight's Tour

Knight's Tour is a solitaire puzzle.   The object is simply to start on any square and visit every square on the board.   Whatever square you click on first is where you start.   The puzzle can be solved for every size of board from 5 x 5 up to 12 x 12.

Strategy Hints for Knight's Tour

Start with the 5x5 board... it is by far the easiest.   Start in any corner, and visit all the other corners first.

Note that there are only two ways in and out of each corner.

Spiralling around the outside of the board and slowly working in towards the centre seems to be a good plan in general, especially for boards with an odd number of squares.   As the board gets bigger there are more possible solutions to the Knight's Tour, but finding one gets harder.

Version History

Version 1.1: Ed Pegg (who maintains an excellent mathematical games page at http://www.mathpuzzle.com/) found my Baron too easy to beat!   So I added in the King level, which improves the evaluation function slightly by making the computer value the centre of the board more than the edges, and also looks at more lines of play.   I may improve it more at another stage.

V1.01:   just tidied up the dialog boxes so no incorrect default game-style or board sizes are shown.   Added a pointer to my home page, and changed text files slightly.

V1.0: first release.

Other Notes

Joust is based on an ancient Amiga game by Lunch Time Software.   However the graphics (such as they are) and the Knight's Tour option are new to this version.

This is my second Chess-related PC game.   You can download my first game "Detective Chess", which is actually a good deal more elaborate than Joust, from various archives including ZDNet. Or from my home page:

http://indigo.ie/~gerryq

There's also a rather cool kaleidoscopic screensaver, and more puzzle games are planned soon. As well as the foregoing, there are some Java games and miscellaneous stuff you may wish to try.   Lastly, there may be further improvements to Joust.

Another site that will interest you if you like Joust is the Chess Variant Site:

http://www.cs.ruu.nl/~hansb/d.chessvar/detective.html

Joust is copyright but freely distributable.

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If you find any bugs, please let me know.

- Gerry