Mancala
for the Mac
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Thanks for downloading Mancala! I hope that you find that you enjoy my game.

Although I am not entirely sure of the origins, when I first owned this game, the instructions on the back said that this was simply an African stone game. So, I believe them, and I'm telling you that this is simply an African stone game. There is no big plot to save the universe from horrible creatures, no flying through real-time texture mapped objects (hey, maybe the next version!). It's simply a game of logic.

The Game:

The point of the game is to be the one who ends up with the most stones in his/her Mancala. The Mancala board is shown below:

Player 1's Bins

Player 1's
Mancala

Player 2's
Mancala

Player 2's Bins
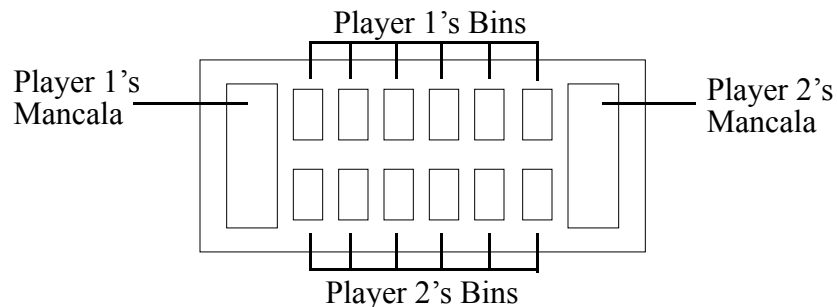
The play goes counter-clockwise around the board. At the beginning of the game by default each player has 4 beads in each bin. (This number is changeable in Preferences…) Player one begins the game by taking **all** the beads from one of his/her bins, and 'sowing' them counter clockwise around the board. Sowing involves simply placing one stone in each bin as the player goes around the board, this includes the opponents bins. While going around the board, a player places a stone in his/her Mancala, but *not the opponents Mancala.* However, the computer takes care of the sowing for you, so you only need to know the rules of sowing for strategy, but don't actually have to do it. If I didn't explain this well enough, play around for a while, and you'll get the hang of it.

Important Rules:

All of these rules can be found in the Help… menu item in Mancala. They are provided here as a second set of references.

If, while you are sowing your beads around the board, the last bead that you sow is in your own Mancala, then you get another turn. The computer gives you this turn automatically if the last bead you sow is in your Mancala.

If, when you sow your beads around the board, the last bead you place is in an empty bin on your side of the board, you capture all of the stones in your opponents bin that is opposite to the one you placed the last bead in, *as well as your own stone*. This applies unless the opponent has zero beads in the bin opposite yours. In that case, nothing special happens.

When one player removes all the beads from his/her side of the board, the game is over. The player with beads left over *gets to put all the beads left on his/her side of the board into his/her Mancala*. You can see that being the first person to get rid of his/her beads is not necessarily the wisest choice.

The person with the most beads at the end wins.

The Menus:

Apple Menu:
> Some information about where to reach me, and the credits.

File Menu:
> *Open…* Open a new game. Note: You can only have one game going at a time. Opening a new game will begin a new one (you will be prompted to be sure this is what you wanted to do).
> *Close…* Close the current open window. If you are in the middle of a game and try to close the game window, you will be prompted to make sure this is what you want to do.
> *Quit* Take big, wild guess!

Edit Menu:
> *Undo Move:* Although the official rules of Mancala are that once you make a move, you're stuck with it, and that's it, I've played way too many games where I've pressed the wrong key, or clicked in the wrong place, and really screwed things up. So I decided that I would add an undo option for those people who screw up as much as I do. Note that you cannot undo the move of the computer. And undo is only one level deep.
> *The rest of the menus…* aren't enabled, so you can't use them anyway.

Game Menu:
> *New Game…* Just like Open… , this option begins a new game.
> *Preferences…* Set some general preferences for Mancala. This includes the number of beads to begin with in the bins, one/two players, and whether the Mac or the human player goes first.
> *One Player / Two Player* Lets you choose whether to play a one player or a two player game. Note that when you start a game, these options are disabled. This is so you don't cheat and have the computer play you until

you start doing bad, and switch so you win. =)

Help… gives some general information on Mancala, and a synopsis of the rules.

Use Sound… Turns all sound on/off.

Level Menu:

This menu decides the intelligence level of the computer. Note that it is disabled during a two player game. The Hard options isn't much more than the medium level. I would appreciate input regarding how to make the hard level harder. If the computer does something stupid, tell me what it did so in the next version, it can be aware of it.

Player One / Player Two:
> *New Player…* Add a player to the list of players.
> *Remove Player…* Remove player(s) from the list of players.
> *Player Statistics…* Get win/loss statistics for any of the players in the list.
> *Mac* this option will just tell you if the Mac is one of the players, and which player the Mac is.
> The rest of the menu consists of the current available players. To select a current player, just go to that menu item. Note that these menus are disabled during a game. You cannot change who you are at the end of the game when you lose. =) To unselect a player in a list, simply hold down the shift key when selecting from the menu. This player will be unchecked.

Preferences…

Here is a general description of what you will find in the Preferences… dialog box.

Start game with: This option decides the number of beads that are put in each bin at the beginning of a game. 3 beads is kind of Cheezy, and it gets harder from there. 4 beads is the default.

1 Player / 2 Players Decides whether you are playing a one player game or a two player game.

Mac Goes First / Human Goes First Decides, only in a one player game (you will note that the option is disabled when a two player game is selected), which player will go first.

Use Sound Turns all sounds on/off.

Use Special Sounds This option controls whether or not the game will use the extra sounds found in the "Mancala Sounds" file. This option is disabled if sound is turned off, or if the sounds file was not available. If you do have the sounds file, and your sound is turned on, but this option is still not enabled, here's what you should do. Be sure that the sounds file is in the same folder as Mancala, and is named "Mancala Sounds" (without the quotes). Mancala only looks in the folder that the game is in for the sounds file. If that doesn't work, write to me and tell me everything you can about the situation. I'll see what I can do.

System Requirements:

• A computer equipped with **color QuickDraw running System 7** or later. I would have done System 6 support, but for one I couldn't find a machine to test one, and I figured if I couldn't find a machine to test on, there weren't enough machines out there to worry about compatibility with. If there is a large outcry, I will probably add System 6.0.x support.

• **300K of free RAM** if you want to use all the sounds. If you do not try to load the sound files, you only need 200K free.

• 8 bit or better color on a 12" or larger monitor. I considered adding Black and White support, but for the time being I am going to suppose that most people who have 12" or larger monitors have color. If there is enough demand, however, I will add support for Black and White for those PowerBook users out there, but I don't expect to ever be adding support for 9" monitors (such as on the SE, Classic...)

Freeware Obligation?

No, not really. You're only obligated to enjoy yourself every once in a while, and don't get too stressed out over life. =)

If you would like to get a hold of me, you can reach me in the following ways:
- E-Mail at: tclement@hmc.edu
- Snail Mail at: Todd Clements
  4955 Cervato Way
  Santa Barbara, CA 93111 USA

I would highly suggest using E-Mail if you have access to it, because it will get to me much quicker, and I can get back to you much quicker.

Note: Mancala may *not* be distributed on the Compuserve Information Systems network. See the included README file for more information.

Troubleshooting

If you are having trouble with Mancala, here are some tips that may help you.

It just crashes. Ahem... well, um. OK, so I'm not perfect. Try deleting the "Mancala Prefs" file from the Preferences folder in the System Folder. It may have gotten corrupted somewhere along the line.

The extra sounds don't play. Make sure that you have the file "Mancala Sounds" in the **same** folder as Mancala. Also check in the Preferences… dialog box to see that the option "Use Special Sounds" is checked, as well as the "Use Sounds" box. You cannot use the extra sounds without using the normal ones.

At the start of the game, it tells me there was a problem with the sounds, but they work later. Don't worry about it. It's my problem, not yours. I'm just not sure how to fix it.

There is no sound whatsoever. Make sure the "Use Sounds" option is checked in the Preferences… dialog box. Make sure that sound is turned on in your Sound control panel in the System Folder.

If you have any other problems, feel free to write me. I may be able to help you fix it, or send you an update if I've already found the bug.

A Glimpse Into the Future

In later versions of Mancala, I hope to rewrite the interface to make it more Mac-Like, and just overall prettier. If you have any suggestions, I would be happy to hear them, and if I use your suggestion, I will give you credit for the idea somewhere in my program.

I also hope to add a better intelligence to the computer player. As of now, the computer is aware of two or three different things which make it competitive, but not hard to beat.

Credits

Much thanks to the following people for helping me get this program out 5 months later than I expected to. =)

> *Mike Garza* for general testing and keeping me away from my computer for hours at a time so that I couldn't finish the game. =)
> *Russ Nelson* for giving me some insights about screen redrawing on the Mac. Hey, this was my first program!
> *The people on comp.sys.mac.programmer* Although they didn't answer all of my questions, they were certainly a help. Thanks!
> *Programmers who have put their work into public domain* The only way to learn is to try, and thanks to all the people who put their materials out so that I could look at them. I couldn't have done a lot of things without some of their code.

Version History

Version 1.0: Initial Release