

Hints & Tricks

by Ambrosia Gamers

This section is dedicated to helping you score better on Ambrosia's entertainment programs. Ambrosia is best known for its arcade action game Maelstrom. Chiral, a puzzle game released by Ambrosia just this last spring, has been awarded best shareware trivial pursuit of the year by ZiffNet/MacUser. Ambrosia's newest arcade style game, Apeiron, is scheduled for release this October.

In the premiere issue of The Ambrosia Times, this section was devoted entirely to Maelstrom strategy. This time around I would like to go over some suggestions for making Chiral (rhymes with spiral) less frustrating. We also received a lot of mail with more Maelstrom tips, so some of these will be featured as well.

If you have some original advice for game play with any of Ambrosia's games send it in. If we print it, we will include your name on our list of review contacts. You will be sent a copy of Ambrosia's next game for your preview before general release. Be the first kid on the block with the latest Ambrosia mind bender.

Chiral

he Basics

We are getting a lot of feedback concerning Chiral's instructions. Game play instructions are listed in a rather long winded background story. Sorry about that, we learn from our mistakes. Here are the basics of game play.

Atoms are positioned on the playing field by pointing and clicking with the mouse. The vial on the right of the screen gives you a preview of what is next.

The object is to build molecules in which all of the atoms are "satisfied." To be satisfied an atom must have all of its bonds fulfilled. The number of bonds required is determined by the number of dots on the atom, or the color of the atom. To form a bond, simply indicate where you desire the atom to be placed, and click the mouse.

Trapped

One important thing to remember is to not place atoms where their bonds

can not be fulfilled. Purple atoms should never be placed near the edge of the screen. Being flush against the edge would not allow the fourth atom to be placed. Likewise, it would not be wise to place a purple or green atom in a corner. This basic rule becomes more important as “walls” start to appear on the screen.

Swapping

Chiral will allow you to swap already placed atoms with atoms appearing in the vial. If you have a green atom where you really need a red one, you can click on the green atom when a red one is at the bottom of the vial. The red atom will take the place of the green atom on the playing screen. The replaced atom will now be at the bottom of the vial, waiting patiently to be placed elsewhere. Using this strategy, a player can really save time. Unfortunately heavy atoms, or marble finished atoms can not be swapped. Once placed, you will hear a loud clunk. That indicates that this atom is here to stay.

Awkward atoms

Besides the stubborn heavy atom, players also have to deal with speed(rabbit) atoms, radioactive atoms and mystery atoms. Rabbit atoms speed up game play, not much can be done about that. Radioactive atoms will take whatever they are attached to and instantly vaporize it. Keep these radioactive atoms away from the structure you are working on. They are very handy for cleaning up stray atoms though. Group all your stray atoms in one corner of the screen and hit them with a radioactive atom to avoid the dreaded stray atom penalty.

These are some of the basic strategies involved with Chiral, write in with your own for fame & fortune.

Maelstrom

Thanks for all the feedback. Here are some of the more successful strategies sent in. It is a tough job, but I tested these hints out and experienced a tremendous boost in my score. Give them a try, and develop your own.

Ramming should not be overlooked in certain circumstances. Anytime you are in a situation where you have picked off the comet and a bonus multiplier—particularly if both are high—ram the nearest asteroids by aiming your ship directly at them and applying shield power just long enough to survive the blast. If you hit dead center of the asteroid, it blows in one piece. Done right, you can complete a wave in only seconds with a bonus in excess of 30,000.

C.A. Gillespie,

Thanks C.A., I would hate to run across you in a mall parking lot.

One of the easiest yet hardest techniques is to observe how asteroids break up when hit from different angles; a well-placed hit can break an asteroid into one or two pieces rather than three.

Jason B.

Whong

Thanks for the geology lesson Jason, I was able to drastically reduce the amount of debris on the screen by using your technique.

If an Acme supply cannister gifts you with frozen objects, go for the steel asteroid: it won't move for a while and is worth 5,000 points (see Ambrosia Times 1.1).

André Rocque

Hey, those Shenobi autonomous mines that the steel asteroids can turn into are not so tough when you get them to stand still. Thanks for the tip.

If you currently have Maelstrom on your computer, the above Go To Icon will bring you straight to the game. Start putting these helpful hints to use and see how much game play improves.