Welcome to OIDS.X! Version 10.0.3

OIDS.X is a fast action arcade style game, melding elements of games like Choplifter, Asteroids, Defender, and Lunar Lander, to make one very fun and addicting Macintosh video game.

OIDS was originally released in 1990 and was a big hit.   It earned a five mice rating from MacWorld magazine back then.   Now it has been enhanced for the more powerful PowerPC series of machines, gaining new features and much smoother game play.

OIDS.X is a shareware game and must be registered to enjoy all of its features.

System Requirements

For success in running OIDS.X, your Macintosh system should meet the following minimum requirements.   The recommended requirements give better performance (and a more enjoyable game play experience.)

Mac OS X 10.1.3 or higher
PowerPC processor required.   G3 Processor or higher (recommended.)
128MB physical RAM.
QuickTime 5.0 or higher
640x480 resolution.   Higher resolutions are recommended.
Thousands or Millions of Colors mode on your video card.   An OpenGL Accelerated video card is required.
Optional: USB Game pad or USB Joystick.

Compatibility with Mac OS X

OIDS.X has been rewritten to run natively on Mac OS X and only runs on Mac OS X.

Quick Start Instructions

Launch OIDS.X by double clicking the OIDS.X icon.   Users with multiple monitors can move the Galaxy Chooser window onto the screen that they wish to play on.   Note that while on multiple monitor systems OIDS.X can run on virtually any monitor/video card that meets the above requirements, the menu bar will remain on the main system screen.

When the game has fully loaded, it will present the 'Galaxy Chooser'.   This is

where you can change settings with the Preferences dialog, set up your preferred keyboard or USB game controller layout, and most importantly, play games.

It is suggested that you familiarize yourself with the keyboard controls.   Go to the 'OIDS.X' menu and choose the 'Preferences...' item.   You will be presented with a Preferences dialog.   Across the top of the dialog are pictures of the different functions of your ship.   Clicking on the pictures will allow you to assign a key or controller button to that function.   The default settings are a set of safe keys that are not used by the system for any of its functions.   They are not necessarily the best keys for all players. Experiment with different key settings to find out what layout suits you the best.

Note: Most Macintosh keyboards have a limited number of keys that can be activated at any one time. The "modifier" keys, such as the shift, control, option, and command keys are immune to this problem and can all be activated at the same time. Unfortunately, system software such as Universal Access can interfere with the use of these keys. If you want to use these keys, then disable Universal Access while playing OIDS.X.

You can also use a USB game controller to play OIDS.X. Plug in the controller before you start OIDS.X. Then while in Preferences, click on the control you wish to adjust and then press the button or otherwise operate the game controller. OIDS.X will detect the use of the USB game controller and assign it to the control of the ship. If the message under the control does not match the label on the game controller, don't be alarmed, it will still work. Most controllers do not report their control labels properly. OIDS.X displays what the controller tells the operating system its control label is. Always make sure your controller is plugged in before you start OIDS.X.

In the left column of the Galaxy Chooser, you'll see a list of files and folders. 'Novoids' is the easiest galaxy and is where you should probably start your gaming experience.   To find out how difficult the other levels are, select the Galaxy you are interested in and then choose the 'Get Info...' menu item from the 'File' menu.   Once you have mastered Novoids, you may want to try some of the harder levels.   To start your game, double-click on Novoids. You will then see the view from inside your mother ship on your journey to the first planetoid in the Novoids Galaxy.   Hitting the 'return' or 'enter' keys will shorten this animation.

Next you'll see the mother ship enter the atmosphere of the planetoid and release you to rescue the OIDs.   Gravity will pull you down.   Use your thrust key to counteract the effects of the gravitational pull.   Practice flying around, slowing down, accelerating, shooting, landing and firing Novabombs. See the OIDS.X Manual for more in-depth information.

Tips for best performance

OIDS.X is capable of running at the same refresh rate of your monitor, providing very smooth animation.   There are several ways to improve the performance of OIDS.X:
Try different settings in the Preferences dialog.   These settings can be modified while a game is in progress, by hitting the pause ('esc') key to pause the game.   The game will pause, and the menu bar will reappear.   Choose 'Preferences' from the 'OIDS.X' menu.   Settings of special interest are:
   The "Synchronize to Vertical Blank" checkbox.   When this item is checked, OIDS.X will synchronize its updates to the screen during the Vertical Blank Interval of the monitor it is playing on.   This will result in the smoothest looking animation, but will limit the frame rate to the refresh rate of the monitor.
   The "Do page flipping" checkbox.   This allows OIDS.X to render its images to a background buffer and then "flip" it forward.   While you are seeing the current image on screen, the game will be working on the next screen on the "new" background buffer.   This option, when checked, can dramatically improve the performance of the game.

Outside of the Preferences controls, there are other factors that affect the smoothness of the game.   The most influential one is the size of the play field.   When a game is paused or when in the Galaxy Chooser, in the lower right hand corner of the play field is a window sizing icon.   You can click on it to resize the play field to any size you wish.   Smaller sizes will perform better.   Larger sizes make for more immersive game play.   Different aspect ratios can perform better than others as well.   Try different sizes to see what suits you best.

One other factor is the Mac OS X Dock.   If it is open and it is even partially obscuring the play field, it can dramatically reduce frame rates.   Either turn on the "Do page flipping" checkbox (which will make the dock irrelevant) or set the Dock to automatically hide.

Registering OIDS.X

OIDS.X is a shareware game, which means if you want to fully enjoy all of its features and game play then you must register it.

Registered users will receive the following benefits:
   No more nag dialogs!

Each game starts with more ships than the unregistered version.
You'll earn a free ship every time you rescue eight OIDs, instead of only once.
You can create your own levels with the built-in level editor.
You can earn high scores and can post them on the OIDS high score board at http://www.xavagus.com.
You will be able see the ending celebration when you complete a galaxy and return the OIDs to their home planet!

To register your copy of OIDS.X do the following:
Launch OIDS.X.
After you dismiss the nag dialog, go to the 'OIDS.X' menu and choose the 'About OIDS.X' menu item.
In the text of the About OIDS.X dialog will be the words "Registration code:" followed by your registration code.   Please write it down.

Next, click on the Register button.   Then click on the "Go to Registration Page Now" button.   Your favorite browser will launch and then the OIDS registration page will load.   Follow the instructions on the page and have your credit card ready.   On-line registration only accepts credit cards.   Once your payment is approved you will receive your unlock code and instructions on how to unlock your copy of OIDS.X.

Version History

OIDS 10.0
Initial release July 19, 2003

Changes in the OIDS.X 10.0.1 version released August 8, 2003
• Changed text message "No more OIDS left to rescue." to the more positive "All OIDS have been rescued!"
• Fixed configuration problems with certain USB game pads and joysticks.   If you have a USB controller that does not work properly with OIDS.X, please send an email to support@xavagus.com.   I will try to correct any problems as quickly as possible.
• Keyboard play is now improved by maintaining key states through Carbon Events instead of through the Carbon function GetKeys() which has problems on Mac OS 10.2.x.   Make sure you go into Preferences and reconfigure your settings for each of the controls.
• Added a "Pause" control so you can pause and resume your OIDS.X games entirely with your USB controller.
• Added version information to the OIDS.X application bundle (You'll see version information when you do a Get Info command on the OIDS.X application from within the Finder.)
• A scoring bug was found and fixed.   Huge scores were being awarded for

shooting the Tower base just before it exploded.   The amount given was dependent on the speed of your system.   This is clearly not fair and has been corrected.   New high score lists have been created for this corrected version.
• Improved High Score name entry, and Galaxy and Planetoid renaming. Fixed potential buffer overrun issue.
• Added a High Score Tips file, written by the undisputed OIDS champion, Doug Bell.   He created many of the original levels and all of the newer levels and has some of the top high scores on the OIDS score board.   Read it, practice what he says and you'll be a better OIDS player.

Changes in the OIDS.X 10.0.2 version released September 8, 2003
• Added a Tutorial Mode to get beginners started right away.
• Fixed a level editor bug that was showing the shield strength incorrectly.
• Fixed a screen sizing bug that was allowing mountains to be drawn off the bottom of the universe incorrectly.
       Playfield height is now limited to 800 pixels tall which is what it should have always been.
• Fixed the nebulae image placement code to keep nebulae from appearing partially inside mountains.
• Added a new column in the Galaxy Chooser that shows the difficulty of each of the standard levels.
• You can now skip through the celebration by hitting [ENTER] during the celebration.   The animation will speed up dramatically.   Your score will not be affected.

Changes in the OIDS.X 10.0.3 version released November 7, 2003
• Added a workaround for users having problems with keyboard control of the ship in OIDS.X 10.0.2 and earlier.   There is now a preference for using the keyboard exclusively (ignoring any spurious input from other USB devices.)   This setting is now on by default.   Users who play OIDS.X via USB game pads should turn this setting off or else the controllers won't be read during the game.
• Added new tutorial dialog that allows you to choose to never see it again!
• Fixed a bug in the Galaxy loader that was keeping original Atari ST OIDS Galaxies from loading.   They now load correctly.
• FIxed a problem where getting a high score on a level with predefined difficulty would clear the difficulty.

If you need help with OIDS.X please send an email to support@xavagus.com

Thanks and I hope you enjoy OIDS.X,

-Kirk

Kirk A. Baker
Xavagus Prime Software
November 7, 2003