

Microsoft® Midtown Madness™ 1.0 (Chicago Edition) FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

© Copyright 1999 Microsoft Corporation.

This document includes answers to commonly asked questions about playing and optimizing the performance of Midtown Madness.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON MIDTOWN MADNESS:

The online Help system for Midtown Madness includes helpful information about playing the game and maximizing your performance. To access Help, click the "?" button in the upper right corner of any game screen.

You can also refer to a Quick Key Reference list while you are driving. Press F1 to automatically pause the game and display the Quick Key Reference list. Press ESC (or click the Exit Menu button) when you are ready to get back in the action.

For the latest information, visit the Midtown Madness World Wide Web site at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/games/midtown>

Table of Contents

- (1) I'm having trouble installing Midtown Madness. How can I get help from Microsoft Technical Support?
- (2) How can I make the game run faster?
- (3) I didn't register when I installed Midtown Madness. Is it too late to register now?
- (4) How can I reduce the "popping" effect of buildings and other objects in my forward field of view?
- (5) Will additional vehicles and race locations be available for Midtown Madness?
- (6) How can I make my joystick (or steering wheel) feel less twitchy?
- (7) Can I drive using a mouse? Why would I want to?
- (8) How can I adjust the amount of force I can feel with my force feedback controller?
- (9) How do I hook up my steering wheel and pedals to work correctly with Midtown Madness?
- (10) How can I adjust the volume of music, sound effects, and other audio in the game?
- (11) How can I play my own music CDs while I am playing Midtown Madness?
- (12) How do I turn off the movies that play when I start Midtown Madness?
- (13) Is there a list of game controls I can access while I'm playing Midtown Madness?
- (14) I want to customize the control assignments for my joystick (or other game controller). Which actions/inputs can I assign to which controls?
- (15) Is there anything I can do to improve my cornering at high speeds?
- (16) What do the Midtown Safe Mode, No Sound, No Movie, and Redetect Video shortcuts in my Midtown Madness folder do?
- (17) How can I unlock locked vehicles?
- (18) How can I play Midtown Madness with other people for free on the MSN Gaming Zone?
- (19) I prefer more arcade-style racing games. How can I make Midtown Madness feel more like an arcade racer?

- (20) Sometimes I can customize race conditions (i.e., weather, time-of-day, pedestrian, cop, and traffic densities), and sometimes I can't. How come?
 - (21) Why don't all my opponents follow the same path during a race? Am I missing something?
 - (22) I've run some races several times, but I still can't beat them. What can I do to improve my performance?
 - (23) How can I find out more about the vehicles featured in Midtown Madness?
 - (24) I want to drive using manual transmission. How do I shift once I'm in the game?
 - (25) I just changed video cards. How do I get Midtown Madness to detect my new one?
-

(1) Q. I'm having trouble installing Midtown Madness. How can I get help from Microsoft Technical Support?

- A.** If you are having problems installing or playing Midtown Madness, first look in the online Help system or consult the jewel case booklet. You can open the online Help system even if you haven't installed Midtown Madness by double-clicking mm.hlp (located on the Midtown Madness disc). You can also find late-breaking updates and technical information in this FAQ.RTF file or in the README.RTF file (located in the directory where you installed Midtown Madness or on the Midtown Madness disc).

You can also find helpful information on the Microsoft Technical Support World Wide Web page at:

<http://support.microsoft.com/support/games/default.asp>

If you still have a question, Microsoft offers technical support and services ranging from self-help tools to direct assistance with a Microsoft Support Professional. A summary of technical support services, including telephone numbers for support in the United States and Canada, is included in the Midtown Madness jewel case booklet.

For details on these options, including telephone numbers for worldwide support, double-click mm.hlp (located on the Midtown Madness disc), and then click "Getting Help from Microsoft Technical Support" in the Table of Contents. You can open this Help file directly from the Midtown Madness disc if you haven't installed the game.

(2) Q. How can I make the game run faster?

- A.** If you have a computer whose configuration is close to the minimum system requirements for running Midtown Madness, switching to a lower resolution setting may make the game run faster (the safest resolution settings are 320x200, 320x240, and 640x480).

To switch to a lower resolution, click Options (in the upper right corner of any game screen), and then click Graphics Options. In the Resolution list, pick a lower resolution setting, and then click Done.

If you have an older video card, setting your Renderer setting to Software Renderer and turning on the Interlaced Rendering option (only available when Software Renderer is selected in the Renderer list) may also make the game run faster.

Other suggestions for making the game run faster:

Turning on the Speed Loading option in Graphics Options (Options menu) may make

the game run faster on your computer. With Speed Loading turned on, the game will wait to load new textures and geometry until you actually encounter them. The downside to turning on Speed Loading is that Midtown Madness may pause occasionally during gameplay. If that is the case, turn off Speed Loading.

You can also try other methods to reduce the pausing effect:

- Reduce your Texture Resolution setting in Graphics Options.
- Reduce your Far Clip Plane setting in Graphics Options.
- Reduce your Audio Quality setting in Audio Options.
- Close all open applications before starting Midtown Madness.
- Install more RAM on your computer.

Although the advanced physics model featured in Midtown Madness is designed to maintain an accurate simulation experience even at relatively slow frame rates, you can also try the following to make the game run even faster (listed in approximate order of effectiveness):

- Reduce your Resolution setting in Graphic Options.
- If your Renderer setting is set to Software Renderer, turn off Textured Sky or turn on the Interlaced Rendering option in Graphics Options.
- If you have an older 3D hardware accelerator card, or if your Renderer setting is set to Software Renderer, turn off the Textured Sky option in Graphics Options (if Interlaced Rendering is also turned on, turning off Textured Sky will have no effect).
- If you have an older 3D hardware accelerator card, setting your Renderer setting to Software Renderer may improve performance.
- Reduce your Object Detail setting in Graphics Options.
- Turn on the Hide Pedestrians option in Graphics Options.
- Turn off the Cloud Shadows and Vehicle Reflections options in Graphic Options.
- While you are racing or cruising, turn off the rearview mirror by pressing BACKSPACE.
- Race (or cruise) in cockpit view with the dashboard turned off (press D to toggle the dashboard on and off).
- Reduce your Texture Resolution setting in Graphics Options.

The "Video Card Notes and Troubleshooting" section of README.RTF (located in the folder where you installed Midtown Madness or on the Midtown Madness disc) also includes valuable information about optimizing your Graphics settings.

(3) Q. I didn't register when I installed Midtown Madness. Is it too late to register now?

A. No, it's not too late to register your copy of Midtown Madness. To register Midtown Madness after you've installed it, visit the World Wide Web site at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/games/midtown/product/register.htm>

(4) Q. How can I reduce the "popping" effect of buildings and other objects in my forward field of view?

A. Increasing your Object Detail setting in Graphics Options (Options menu and in-game menu) should help reduce the "popping effect." If you find that "popping" is still a problem, reducing the Far Clip Distance setting (also in Graphics Options) may help.

The "Video Card Notes and Troubleshooting" section of README.RTF also includes valuable information on optimizing your Graphics settings.

(5) Will additional vehicles and race locations be available for Midtown Madness?

- A.** Check the official Midtown Madness World Wide Web site for the latest information on additional vehicles and race locations for Midtown Madness:

<http://www.microsoft.com/games/midtown>

(6) Q. How can I make my joystick (or steering wheel) feel less twitchy?

- A.** Adjusting the Steering Sensitivity and Controller Dead Zone settings for your joystick or steering wheel may help make your driving experience a little less twitchy. To increase the Controller Dead Zone setting, click the Options button (in the upper right corner of any game screen), click Control Options, and confirm that the controller you want to adjust is selected in the Controllers list. Next, click the plus sign on the Controller Dead Zone slider control to increase the Dead Zone setting. To reduce the Steering Sensitivity setting, click the minus sign on the Steering Sensitivity slider. You can also adjust these settings during a race by pressing ESC and clicking Options, and then Control Options. You may have to experiment to find the perfect setting for your driving style.
-
-

(7) Q. Can I drive using a mouse? Why would I want to?

- A.** Although a joystick or a steering wheel will almost always provide the best driving experience, driving with a mouse may give you finer control over your vehicle than you would experience driving with the keyboard.

You can specify the mouse as your primary driving control in Control Options (Options menu). You may want to experiment with your Steering Sensitivity and Controller Dead Zone settings (also in Control Options) as you tweak the handling so that it's just the way you like it.

When you're driving using the mouse while in external views (not in cockpit view), it's also a good idea to turn on the mouse feedback indicator, which gives you a visual indication of how hard you're cornering. Press H to toggle the mouse feedback indicator on and off.

(8) Q. How can I adjust the amount of force I can feel with my force feedback controller?

- A.** Adjusting the Collision Intensity and Road Force Intensity settings for your joystick or steering wheel can help you customize your force feedback experience. To adjust these settings, click the Options button (in the upper right corner of any game screen), click Control Options, and confirm that the controller you want to adjust is selected in the Controllers list. Confirm that the Force Feedback option is selected. Next, click the plus sign on the slider controls to increase the settings. To reduce the settings, click the minus signs on the slider controls. You can also adjust these

settings during a race by pressing ESC and clicking Options, and then Control Options.

(9) Q. How do I hook up my steering wheel and pedals to work correctly with Midtown Madness?

- A.** For complete instructions about how to install specific types of steering wheels for use with Midtown Madness, see the "Configuring Your Steering Wheel" section of online Help (click Game Controls in the main Table of Contents). This section includes topics about installing the Microsoft Sidewinder Force-Feedback Wheel, ThrustMaster NASCAR (R) Pro Racing Wheel (outside U.S., ThrustMaster Formula One Racing Wheel), ThrustMaster Formula T1 and T2, ThrustMaster Grand Prix 1, and CH Products Pro Pedals.
-

(10) Q. How can I adjust the volume of music, sound effects, and other audio in the game?

- A.** You can use the Windows Volume Control to set the audio level for your computer, and you can also independently set Wave Volume (which affects the volume of sound effects and commentary in the game) and CD Volume (which effects the volume of music played in the game) from within Midtown Madness.

To adjust the Wave Volume and CD Volume settings, click the Options button (in the upper right corner of any game screen), click Audio Options, and then click the plus or minus signs on the Wave Volume and CD Volume slider controls.

For a more peaceful racing experience, you can also completely turn off the Audio Effects, Play Music, and Play Commentary options in Audio Options (Options menu). You can also adjust these settings during a race by pressing ESC, clicking Options, and then clicking Audio Options.

(11) Q. How can I play my own music CDs while I am playing Midtown Madness?

- A.** You can listen to music from the Midtown Madness CD or from any music CD while you play Midtown Madness.

To play the Midtown Madness CD, insert the Midtown Madness CD into the same CD-ROM drive from which you installed the game.

To play your own music CD, Hold down the SHIFT key while inserting the music CD. The SHIFT key prevents the Windows® CD player window from displaying, and needs to be held down at least 10 seconds to prevent that window from displaying. Make sure that the drive is the same drive from which you installed Midtown Madness.

During gameplay, use the following universal keyboard game controls to play music:

Press this key:	To do this:
2	Display the CD player
3	Play or stop the current track
4	Select the previous track
5	Select the next track

If the CD will not play, press ALT+TAB to switch to the Windows® CD Player window, close it, and then restart with the step above.

(12) Q. How do I turn off the movies that play when I start Midtown Madness?

- A.** You have several options if you don't want to watch the movies that play when you start Midtown Madness. First, you can hold down the left mouse button (or press ESC) to skip the movies when you start the game. To permanently disable them, you can either delete or rename the AVI files (located in the folder where you installed Midtown Madness) or run the No Movie shortcut (also located in the folder where you installed Midtown Madness).
-

(13) Q. Is there a list of game controls I can access while playing Midtown Madness?

- A.** Yes. While you are racing (or cruising), press F1 to pause the game and display a complete list of game controls. Press ESC or (click the Exit Menu button) when you are ready to get back in the action.

You can also consult the list of game controls included in the Midtown Madness jewel case booklet.

(14) Q. I want to customize the control assignments for my joystick (or other game controller). Which actions/inputs can I assign to which controls?

- A.** Steering and driving inputs (i.e., turning left and right, accelerating and braking) can be assigned to either control axes or buttons or keys. Other controls can only be assigned to buttons or keys (i.e., Map and HUD toggles, Shift Up and Shift Down, Change Views, etc.).

To customize your controller assignments, click the Options button (located in the upper right corner of any game screen), and then click Control Options. In the Key Functions list, click the name of the function you want to assign to a new control or key, and then press the control or key you want. To revert to the default settings, click the Defaults button at the bottom of the Control Options screen.

(15) Q. Is there anything I can do to improve my cornering at high speeds?

- A.** When cornering at high speeds, try using the handbrake and accelerator at the same time. Braking alone can slow you down too much, while accelerating through a corner without braking can slide you right into traffic. To use the handbrake, press the SPACEBAR (if the keyboard is your selected controller) or joystick button 2 (if the joystick is your selected controller).
-

(16) Q. What do the Midtown Safe Mode, No Sound, No Movie, and Redetect Video shortcuts in my Midtown Madness folder do?

- A.** The Midtown Safe Mode, No Sound, and No Movie, and Redetect Video shortcuts are included to help you solve video card, audio, and video problems you may encounter when installing or playing Midtown Madness.

Use the Midtown Safe Mode shortcut if you encounter problems with your video card configuration. When you use this shortcut, Midtown Madness starts with the Rendering option set to Software Only and the opening movies are not played. Midtown Madness also automatically redetects your video card. You can confirm that your video card is recognized by Midtown Madness by checking the Renderer list in Graphic Options (Options menu).

Use the Redetect Video shortcut when you've changed video cards. When you use this shortcut, Midtown Madness will recognize your new video card and set Graphics options (Options menu) accordingly. (See also Question #23).

Use the No Sound shortcut to start Midtown Madness with all audio, including audio effects, music, and in-game commentary, turned off. Use this shortcut if you're having problems with sound in the game, or if you prefer a silent gameplay experience. You can turn these sounds back on in Audio Options (Options menu).

Use the No Movie shortcut to start Midtown Madness without playing the opening movies. Use this shortcut if you're having problems with the movies that play when you start Midtown Madness, or if you don't want to see the movies each time you start the game.

(17) Q. How can I unlock locked vehicles?

- A.** To unlock specific vehicles, follow these steps:

City Bus: To unlock the City Bus, Amateurs must finish in first, second, or third in any two races. Professionals need to take first place in any two races.

Freightliner Century Class 18-wheel truck: To unlock the Freightliner, Amateurs and Professionals must "beat the clock" in any five Blitz races.

'68 Ford Mustang Fastback: To unlock the Fastback, Amateurs must finish in the top three places in any five Circuit races. Professionals must finish in first place in any five Circuit races.

Mustang Police Car: To unlock the Police Car, Amateurs must finish in the top three places in any six Checkpoint races. Professionals must finish in first place.

Panoz GTR: The only way to unlock the awesome power of the Panoz GTR is to accumulate 8,000 points while racing as a Professional (you don't earn points when you're racing as an Amateur!). Points are awarded based on two important criteria: how well you place in races, and which vehicles you're driving. If you finish well in a race driving a slower vehicle, you'll get more points than if you do the same thing in a faster car.

(18) Q. How can I play Midtown Madness with other people for free on the MSN Gaming Zone?

- A.** Once you've started Midtown Madness, click Multiplayer on the main game screen, and then click MSN Gaming Zone on the Multiplayer Connection screen. Your Web browser will start, and you will be automatically connected to the MSN Gaming Zone Web site (<http://zone.msn.com>) where you can find other people ready to play Midtown Madness.
-
-

(19) Q. I prefer more arcade-style racing games. How can I make Midtown Madness feel more like an arcade racer?

- A.** By adjusting the Physics Realism setting, you can make Midtown Madness behave more like an arcade-style racing game. The Physics Realism slider is located on the Vehicles Screen, and you can assign a distinct Physics Realism setting to each vehicle featured in Midtown Madness. To decrease the setting and make Midtown Madness behave more like an arcade racer, click the minus sign on the Physics Realism slider control.
-
-

(20) Q. Sometimes I can customize race conditions (i.e., weather, time-of-day, pedestrian, cop, and traffic densities), and sometimes I can't. How come?

- A.** If you're racing as an Amateur, placing in the top three places in any one Circuit, Blitz, or Checkpoint race unlocks the weather, time-of-day, and traffic, pedestrian and cop density conditions for that specific race. This allows you to customize your race experience for new challenges (and new landspeed records!). If you're racing as a Professional, you'll have to place first in each Circuit, Blitz, or Checkpoint race for the same customization privileges.
-
-

(21) Q. Why don't all my opponents follow the same path during a race? Am I missing something?

- A.** Your opponents are exploiting every advantage they can find to fly across the finish line in front of you! They're cutting corners, using shortcuts, diving into tunnels, driving on the sidewalk—whatever it takes to win!

Also keep in mind that in checkpoint races, you can clear the checkpoints in any order, so one of your opponents may have discovered a faster route that lets him or her charge through checkpoints in a more efficient manner. Following your opponents can be a smart strategy—they can help you find new ways to win!

To help you discover new routes, you can change which checkpoint the green checkpoint arrow is pointing at by pressing S to point toward the next checkpoint, and X to point toward the previous checkpoint.

(22) Q. I've run some races several times, but I still can't beat them. What can I do to improve my performance?

- A.** See Question #21 for tips on finding the best route for a specific race. Following your opponents can be a valuable learning experience!

It's also important to take advantage of shortcuts and tunnels, and choosing the right vehicle for the job can make all the difference in the world. Sometimes you need the

pure power of the Ford F-350, while at other times you need the nimble handling of the new Ford Mustang GT. Most importantly, always remember: practice makes perfect!

(23) Q. How can I find out more about the vehicles featured in Midtown Madness?

- A.** The Vehicles Showcase button on the Vehicles screen is your ticket to real-world information about the awesome vehicles featured in Midtown Madness.

For the inside scoop on a specific vehicle, including real-world specifications and a URL for the manufacturer's World Wide Web site, click the vehicle's name in the Vehicles list on the Vehicles screen, and then click Vehicles Showcase. When you're ready to return to the Vehicles screen, click Done.

(24) Q. I want to drive using manual transmission. How do I shift once I'm in the game?

- A.** To drive using manual transmission, you can either clear the Automatic Transmission check box on the Vehicles screen, or press T while you're racing to toggle between automatic and manual transmissions.

To upshift while you are racing, press A. To downshift, press Z.

(25) Q. I just changed video cards. How do I get Midtown Madness to detect my new one?

- A.** To have Midtown Madness detect your new video card, double-click the Redetect Video shortcut (located in the folder where you installed Midtown Madness).