

Maxit Help Contents

Maxit is a game of skill, luck and mathematics.

The goal of Maxit is to score more points than the computer.

For more information select one of the topics below.

[How to play Maxit](#)

[Difficulty levels](#)

[Strategy and tips](#)

[The Maxit INI file](#)

[The history of Maxit](#)

[License](#)

How to play the game

Playing Maxit is fairly easy.

The game is played on a board divided in to eight rows and eight columns or 64 fields. In all but one of those fields a number is placed. These numbers are picked at random from a pre-defined set (see [history](#)) ranging from -9 to 15.

On the last remaining position, the Maxit cursor will be placed. The cursorfield will be yellow and contains the letter 'M'.

The cursor indicates the row on the board from which you, the player, will have to select one field. The fields from which you can choose will be colored bright green, opposed to the gray of the other fields and the yellow of the cursor.

The value of the field you choose will be added to your score. Don't forget that some fields contain negative numbers. After you've chosen a field the Maxit cursor will be moved to it and the previous position of the cursor will be emptied.

Now it's the computers turn. The computer will have to choose a field in the column where you placed the Maxit cursor. The fields from which the computer can choose will be colored dark green, so you can follow what's going on. The number the computer picks will be added to its score and the cursor will be moved to the corresponding position. After that it's your turn again.

This goes on until the computer can't make a move anymore. You will always have the last move, which is to your advantage. There is a big chance that you can pick a column where the field in your row is the only one left. In that case you can force the game to end, even though there are lots of fields that still have numbers in them. You should only do this if you can win this way.

To keep track of scores there is a small scoreboard on the right of the gameboard, with three positions. The first is labeled 'Maxit' and here you can find the last selected value, either by you or the computer. You'll find that if the computer picks a value, you won't see what it was, so look at the scoreboard to find out. The other two positions are fairly straightforward.

The History of Maxit

The first time I played Maxit was on a P2000T computer over ten years ago. You've probably never heard of the P2000T, it's from the same period as the TRS80 and Sinclair ZX Spectrum, the tape area more or less.

A friend of mine had translated Maxit from the TRS80 to the P2000T. While both of these computers used Basic, differences in dialects made the software about as portable as the Grand Canyon. I don't know if the TRS80 incarnation of Maxit was it's first, I've never even seen that one myself, but I've seen several other incarnations in the Public Domain.

After the prices of IBM compatible PC's reached somewhere near sanity for home users, Maxit was again ported, this time to Turbo Pascal. Up until then the user-interface had always used text with some primitive graphics and the most basic keyboard input, but somehow that didn't quite cut it on the PC, what with all the graphics and even a mouse available. Maxit disappeared out of sight for a while.

The PC however was an instant success, whether it deserved it or not and when Microsoft released it's first version of Visual Basic for the enormously successful Windows environment, I needed a program that could do with a facelift and could use all these fancy graphics to give it a try. And so Maxit was re-incarnated again and when it was time to start programming in C for Windows my natural choice for a first program was Maxit and you can see the result. I hope you're as pleased with it as I am.

In all it's incarnations the (as far as we know) original algorithm has been used, I've added one of my own in this incarnation (see [difficulty levels](#)). Also the set of numbers used to set up the game hasn't been changed, however I'm thinking about adding a random set to the game to make it more interesting. Let me know what you think!

Difficulty levels

Maxit has two difficulty levels: Classic and Advanced.

The Classic algorithm has been handed down from previous incarnations of Maxit (see [history](#)). It's more or less the beginner level. The Advanced level should prove more challenging and is intended for those people who are better acquainted with the game. You can select the difficulty level in the 'Game' menu.

You can also set your preferred level in the Options menu. The preferred level is saved in the [maxit INI file](#), but will not affect the current settings.

Maxit INI File

Maxit will create an INI file in the same directory in which the executable has been installed.
When Maxit is started it will read your preferred [difficulty level](#) from this file.

Maxit will also store its highscore list in this file. The difference between your score and that of the computer determines if you will be listed in the Hall of Fame.

Strategy and Tips

Be careful not to give away too much, the computer is usually better at looking ahead than you are (hey, that's part of the challenge, right?), so when the computer offers to let you take one of the higher numbers, it's usually because it's the best move it can 'think' of. However the computer has to make some assumptions about what your next moves will be so maybe you can take the bait without getting caught in the trap. Confused? Well there is an element of luck involved.....

With every move you remove one number from the board, but in doing so you limit your options. Once a field has been emptied it will stay empty. This means that near the end of the game you could run out of options real fast. This is something that can work in your favor, but be careful!

You also have the option of ending the game, as described in [how to play](#), when an opportunity presents itself. This is something to watch out for.

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Thanks

I'd like to thank Etienne Jacobs for the incarnations of Maxit he made before me and Jeroen Gremmen for causing and helping solve a minor mystery.

