

APX

ATARI® PROGRAM EXCHANGE
User-Written Software for ATARI Home Computers



COUNTER

An introduction to numbers in four languages
(ages 3-8)

Requires:

Cassette: 16K (APX-10148)

ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge

Diskette: 24K (APX-20148)

Education

COUNTER

by
Al Casper

Program and Manual Contents © 1982 Al Casper

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Overview

COUNTER is a colorful, friendly, and fun way for young children to learn to count to fifteen in any of four languages: English, Spanish, French, and German. COUNTER offers six skill levels and a variety of ways to enter numbers, making the program continually challenging and interesting as a child progresses.

Required accessories

ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge

- Cassette version
16K RAM
ATARI 410 Program Recorder
- Diskette version
24K RAM
ATARI 810 Disk Drive

Optional accessories

- A set of ATARI Paddle Controllers
- One ATARI Joystick Controller

Contacting the author

Users wishing to contact the author about COUNTER may write to:

Al P. Casper
152 East Juneau Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Acknowledgments

Jill Casper, Carolyn Clay, and Dudley C. Blank helped with the translations for COUNTER.

Loading COUNTER into computer memory

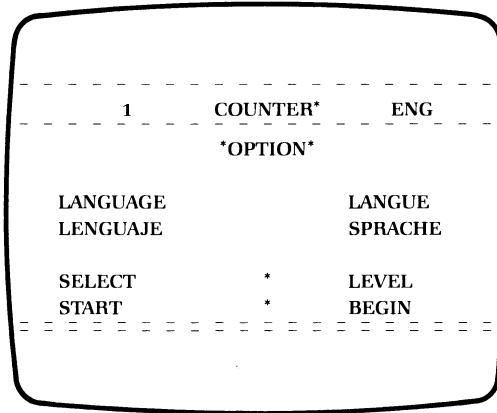
1. Insert the ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge in the left cartridge slot of your computer.
2. If you plan to use either the Paddle or Joystick Controller options, plug your Paddle or Joystick controllers into the first (the leftmost) controller jack at the front of your computer console.
3. *If you have the cassette version of COUNTER:*
 - a. Have your computer turned OFF.
 - b. Insert the COUNTER cassette into the program recorder's cassette holder and press REWIND on the recorder until the tape rewinds completely. Then press PLAY to prepare the program recorder for loading the program.
 - c. Turn on the computer while holding down the START key.
 - d. When you hear a beep, release the START key and press the RETURN key. The program will load into computer memory and start automatically.

If you have the diskette version of COUNTER:

- a. Have your computer turned OFF.
- b. Turn on your disk drive.
- c. When the BUSY light goes out, open the disk drive door and insert the COUNTER diskette with the label in the lower right-hand corner nearest to you. (Use disk drive one if you have more than one drive.)
- d. Turn on your computer and your TV set. The program will load into computer memory and start automatically.

Choosing your options

The title and program options display as follows.



The number (1) to the left of the COUNTER* title indicates the skill level, and the abbreviation (ENG) to the right of the title indicates the language. You can change both options, as described below, before starting to play. Or, you can use the easiest skill level and the English version by pressing the START key now.

Skill level

Press the SELECT key to choose a higher skill level. The six levels available are:

Level 1	Counts to 5	Long time limit
Level 2	Counts to 10	Long time limit
Level 3	Counts to 15	Long time limit
Level 4	Counts to 5	Short time limit
Level 5	Counts to 10	Short time limit
Level 6	Counts to 15	Short time limit

A long time limit waits for about 60 seconds for a response. A short time limit waits for about 30 seconds for a response. When a time limit expires without a response, the correct number automatically displays and COUNTER then goes on to another set of objects.

Language

Press the OPTION key to choose another language. The four languages available are:

ENG	English	
ESP	Spanish	Espanol
FRA	French	Francais
DEU	German	Deutsch

Starting the program

When you're ready to begin, press the START key.

COUNTER's automatic cycling features

COUNTER automatically starts cycling through the program whenever it expects some kind of input (for example, selecting an option or entering an answer) but receives none after about one minute. To regain control of the program, press the START key.

You can start the cycling feature yourself anytime the message:

IT'S YOUR TURN

displays, by pressing the SELECT key.

Using COUNTER

Part 1: COUNT WITH ME

In part 1 of COUNTER, the computer places Gorks (five-legged creatures from Atariland) on the screen, displays the number of Gorks, and chimes once for each Gork. Part 1 continues until all Gorks up to the selected skill level limit display. You can control the time of the display by pressing 2 for the slower speed or 1 for the slowest. Press 3 or any other key to return to the original display speed.

You can end part 1 at any time by pressing the START key. After a short delay, part 2 begins.

Part 2: IT'S YOUR TURN

In part 2, a number of objects such as barns or sailboats display, one at a time. This lets you count the objects as they appear on the screen. After all the objects display, the bars at the bottom of the screen rotate their colors. That's your signal to count the objects and enter a number.

Entering your count

You may enter your count in different ways, and you can go back and forth between these ways at any time. You can use the SPACE BAR on the keyboard or the Paddle Controller or Joystick Controller to count up to the total number of objects on the screen. Or, you can enter the total number directly by pressing a number key on the keyboard. In every case, if the number you enter is correct, the screen turns green and a short melody plays before COUNTER continues. If the number is incorrect, the screen briefly flashes orange and yellow and then COUNTER waits for another guess. COUNTER doesn't continue until you select the correct number or until the time limit is reached.

Counting with the SPACE BAR and START key. Press the SPACE BAR once to count each object on the screen. The numbers in the upper right- and left-hand corners of the screen, as well as the word for the number being counted (displayed in between the two numerals) show how far you've counted. If you make a mistake and press the SPACE BAR too many times, keep pressing the SPACE BAR until the number starts over at 1, and count up again. Then press the START key to tell COUNTER you've finished counting.

(Note. When you use this method, you can't have a Joystick or Paddle Controller plugged in.)

Counting with a Paddle Controller. Using a Paddle Controller requires more skill and is recommended for older children. Turn the paddle slowly to count each object on the screen. The numbers in the upper right- and left-hand corners of the screen, as well as the word for the number being counted (displayed in between the two numerals) show how far you've counted. If you make a mistake and increase the number too far, turn the paddle in the other direction. Then press the red trigger button to tell COUNTER you've finished counting.

Counting with a Joystick Controller. Press the red trigger button once to count each object on the screen. The numbers in the upper right- and left-hand corners of the screen, as well as the word for the number (displayed between the two numerals) show how far you've counted. If you make a mistake and press the red button too many times, keep pressing it until the number starts over at 1, and count up again. Then move the joystick in any direction to tell COUNTER you've finished counting.

Entering a total with the number and START keys. You can count up the objects on the screen to yourself and then enter the total by pressing the number key(s) and then pressing the START key. If you press the wrong number key, correct the number by pressing the number key(s) you really wanted.

The progress report

COUNTER doesn't continuously display the number of correct and incorrect answers. However, you can obtain a progress report by pressing the ATARI key. After a brief pause, the score displays above the bars at the bottom of the screen.

Restarting COUNTER

To restart COUNTER at any time, press the OPTION key, which returns you to the option display. You can then reselect the skill level and language. Do *not* press the SYSTEM RESET key to restart the program.

Quick reference sheet

Skill level and language selection

Use the	To
OPTION key	Select the language
SELECT key	Select the skill level
START key	Start COUNTER
1	Display Gorks at slowest speed
2	Display Gorks at slower speed

Part 1: COUNT WITH ME

Use the	To
START key	End the Gork display and continue the program End the auto-cycling feature
OPTION key	Return to skill level and language selection

Part 2: IT'S YOUR TURN

Use the	To
SPACE BAR	Increase the number displayed (then press START)
Number keys	Indicate the count total (then press START)
START key	Complete a number guess from the keyboard End the auto-cycling feature
Joystick	Increase the number by pressing button (and move Joystick)
Paddle	Change a number by turning paddle (then press button)
OPTION key	Return to skill level and language selection
SELECT key	Start the auto-cycling feature
ATARI key	Display a progress report

To Use the	Do This
Keyboard	Make sure no paddle is plugged into jack 1
Paddle	Plug the paddle into jack 1
Joystick	Plug the joystick into jack 1

Review Form

We're interested in your experiences with APX programs and documentation, both favorable and unfavorable. Many of our authors are eager to improve their programs if they know what you want. And, of course, we want to know about any bugs that slipped by us, so that the author can fix them. We also want to know whether our instructions are meeting your needs. You are our best source for suggesting improvements! Please help us by taking a moment to fill in this review sheet. Fold the sheet in thirds and seal it so that the address on the bottom of the back becomes the envelope front. Thank you for helping us!

1. Name and APX number of program.

2. If you have problems using the program, please describe them here.

3. What do you especially like about this program?

4. What do you think the program's weaknesses are?

5. How can the catalog description be more accurate or comprehensive?

6. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent", please rate the following aspects of this program:

- _____ Easy to use
- _____ User-oriented (e.g., menus, prompts, clear language)
- _____ Enjoyable
- _____ Self-instructive
- _____ Useful (non-game programs)
- _____ Imaginative graphics and sound

7. Describe any technical errors you found in the user instructions (please give page numbers).

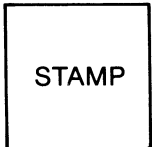
8. What did you especially like about the user instructions?

9. What revisions or additions would improve these instructions?

10. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 representing "poor" and 10 representing "excellent", how would you rate the user instructions and why?

11. Other comments about the program or user instructions:

From



ATARI Program Exchange
P.O. Box 427
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COUNTER

by Al Casper

Recommended for ages 3-8/Written in BASIC and machine language

Young children will happily learn to count to fifteen with this friendly introduction to numbers. Bright colors and happy sounds capture youngsters' attention and add to the fun of counting exercises in English, French, German, or Spanish.

COUNTER has two parts. First, a number of five-legged Gorks pop up on the screen. For each Gork, the Arabic numeral and the word for the number in the selected language scroll across the bottom of the screen and a chime counts the number of Gorks currently on the screen. In the second part, COUNTER displays a random number of objects, such as sailboats or barns, and waits for the child to count them. He or she can either use the space bar, Joystick Controller, or Paddle Controller to count each object, or press a number key to indicate the total number of objects. Each response changes the screen's background color, and after each correct answer, the screen turns green and a short melody plays. With one keystroke, parents can check on a child's progress.

All four versions of COUNTER have six levels of difficulty. As the levels increase, permitted response time decreases and the maximum number of objects displayed increases. COUNTER can also serve as an elementary vocabulary tutorial in any of the program's four languages.

The author invites written questions and comments.

About the Author



AL CASPER

Counter is the result of Al Casper's search for the ideal way to introduce the computer and numbers to his three-year-old daughter. When he saw the potential of this program, he quickly expanded it into its current multilingual form. A self-educated programmer, Al studies digital electronics and microprocessors in his spare time to learn more about the capabilities of his ATARI Home Computer. In addition to his programming activities, Al keeps busy as vice-president of his family's printing business, where he specializes in hot-stamping and embossing. The Caspers also raise and show Arabian horses on their five-acre farm in Saukville, Wisconsin.

REVIEW COMMENTS

COUNTER has all the color, sound, and action needed to captivate younger children. When ignored, the program slowly cycles through its repertoire, enticing a child to come play with it.

The user manual is VERY GOOD.

OPTIONAL

A set of Atari Paddle Controllers
One ATARI Joystick Controller

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