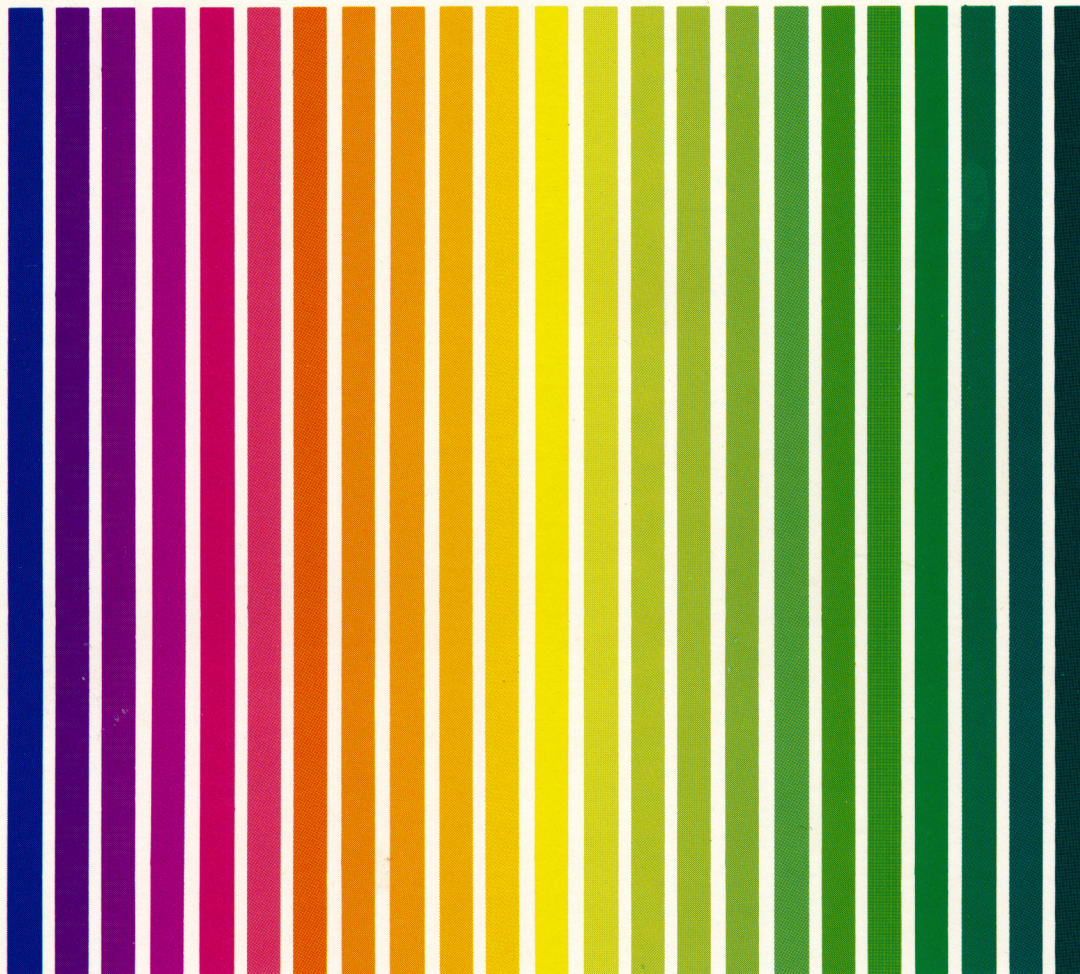# APX

## ATARI® PROGRAM EXCHANGE

Dale Disharoon

# WORDMAKER

APX-10099          APX-20099

March 1982

# User-Written Software for ATARI Home Computers

Dale Disharoon

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# WORDMAKER

## by

## Dale Disharoon

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# INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

WORDMAKER is a fast-paced game for players of all ages. Young children practice spelling and reading. Adults develop more interest in language and start searching dictionaries for unusual words like rad, ret, or rue.

One or two players use Joystick Controllers to make three- or four-letter words. A digital timer ticks off seconds as the race begins. Each time you press the Joystick's trigger, the computer takes a fraction of a second to check if the word is legal or has already been used. As the game proceeds, the screen displays a list of each player's words. If you like, you can print the word list. At the end of the game, the name of the winner of a two-player game displays. In the one-player version, a player's high score displays. You then race against the clock and try to surpass your previous score.

## REQUIRED ACCESSORIES

ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge
One ATARI Joystick Controller per player

### Cassette version

32K RAM
ATARI 410 Program Recorder

### Diskette version

40K RAM
ATARI 810 Disk Drive

## OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES

An ATARI printer or equivalent printer

## CONTACTING THE AUTHOR

Users wishing to contact the author about WORDMAKER may write to him at:

Box 215
Manchester, CA 95459

or call him at:

707/882-2477

# GETTING STARTED

## LOADING WORDMAKER INTO COMPUTER MEMORY

1. Plug the Joystick Controller into the first (leftmost) controller jack at the front of your computer console.

2. Insert the ATARI BASIC Language Cartridge in the cartridge slot of your computer.

3. <u>If you have the cassette version of WORDMAKER:</u>

    a. Turn on your TV set.

    b. Turn on your computer and connect your program recorder to the computer and to a wall outlet.

    c. Slide the WORDMAKER cassette into the program recorder's cassette holder and press REWIND on the recorder until the tape rewinds completely. Then press PLAY.

    d. Type CLOAD on your computer and then press the RETURN key two times. The tape will load into computer memory.

    e. After the tape finishes loading, the word READY will display on your TV screen. Type RUN and press the RETURN key. The first display screen will appear on your TV screen.

<u>If you have the diskette version of WORDMAKER:</u>

    a. Turn on your disk drive.

    b. When the BUSY light goes out, open the disk drive door and insert the WORDMAKER diskette with the label in the lower right-hand corner nearest to you. Close the door.

    c. Turn on your computer and TV set.

    d. When the READY prompt displays on your TV screen, type RUN "D:WORDMAKE" and press the RETURN key. If you're using more than one disk drive, remember to follow the device initial (D) with the number of the drive containing the WORDMAKER diskette (e.g., RUN "D2:WORDMAKE" for disk drive two). The program will load into computer memory and start.

THE FIRST DISPLAY SCREEN

After the program loads into computer memory, the screen fills with the words "WORD MAKER" and an image of the Wordmaker Machine. A short tune plays while the copyright notice emerges from the Wordmaker Machine. At the bottom of the screen two instructions display:

Press START to begin
Press OPTION for instructions


SELECTING YOUR OPTIONS

Choosing the number of players

Once you press the START key, WORDMAKER displays the word "PLAYERS:", followed by the number one. You use the first (far left) Joystick to make your selection. Push your Joystick forward to change the one to a two. Press the red trigger on your Joystick to make your decision.

Choosing the time limit

Now the words "TIME LIMIT:" appear. Again, pushing the first Joystick cycles you through your timing options. You can select a one-, two-, three-, four-, or five-minute game. Press the red trigger on the Joystick to complete the selection.

Choosing the length of words

After choosing your time limit, the word "LETTERS:" appears on the screen. You choose three- or four-letter words by pushing the Joystick back and forth. Again, press the red trigger on the Joystick to complete your choice.

Entering the players' names
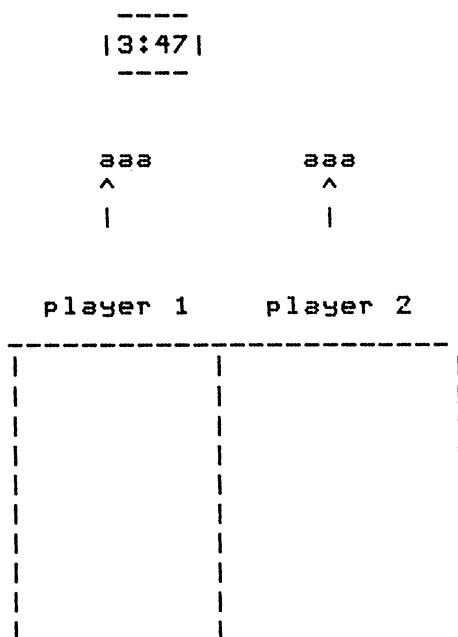
You now see a prompt at the bottom of the screen that reads, "ENTER NAMES/PRESS RETURN". Use the computer keyboard to enter each name, which can be up to ten letters. Press the RETURN key after each entry. You can use the DELETE/BACKSPACE key to correct typing mistakes. If you don't want to enter any names, simply press the RETURN key. The computer will use "Player 1" and "Player 2" as names.

# USING WORDMAKER

## PLAYING THE GAME

A digital timer immediately begins counting down from your chosen time limit. Three letters display for each player. Push your Joystick left or right and an arrow appears beneath the word. The game screen looks like this:

```
             ----
            |3:47|
             ----


         aaa         aaa
          ^           ^
          |           |


     player 1     player 2
     _____
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |           |           |     |
    |_____|_____|_____|
```

You create words by positioning the arrow under the letter to be changed. Push the Joystick forward to cycle forward through the alphabet. Pull it back to cycle backward. Be gentle with the Joystick. A slight nudge in any direction causes movement.

Press the red trigger button when you think you have a word. The computer immediately checks your word against its data bank of words. One of three things happens.

1. If your word isn't a real word, two small arrows flash and you lose five points.
2. If your word has already been used by either you or your opponent, the word

### USED

flashes on the screen. You lose no points for trying a "USED" word.
3. If your word is really a word and has not been used, you earn five points and the word displays in your playing area.

You may not use proper names, plurals, or abbreviations.

When the timer reaches thirty seconds, your Joysticks freeze for a few seconds and the message

> 30 SECOND WARNING

flashes above your words. You can examine your progress and plan your final strategy.

When the timer reaches zero, the words

> TIME'S UP * OPTION/START

display. You now have the option of printing your word lists. Turn on the printer and the interface module, if applicable, and press the OPTION key to start the printing. A tone sounds when the printing is finished. If you want to bypass the PRINT option, press the START key. The scoreboard will display on the screen.

NOTE: You can end the game early (before the timer runs out) by pressing the START key.


## THE SCOREBOARD AND NEXT MATCH

For the one-player game, the computer displays the player's current score and high score.


For the two-player game, the computer displays a record of wins and the prompt,

> SAME GAME

Pressing the "N" (for no) key returns you to the WORDMAKER MENU where you can choose new options. Pressing "Y" lets you keep the same players' names, time limit, and choice of three- or four-letter words. You now see the prompt,

> RENEW WORDS?

If you press "Y", all of the words in the data bank are restored for use in the next game. Press "N" and you won't be able to use the words from the previous game. This choice forces players to use different words and the competition mounts. Now, press the START key to begin your next match.
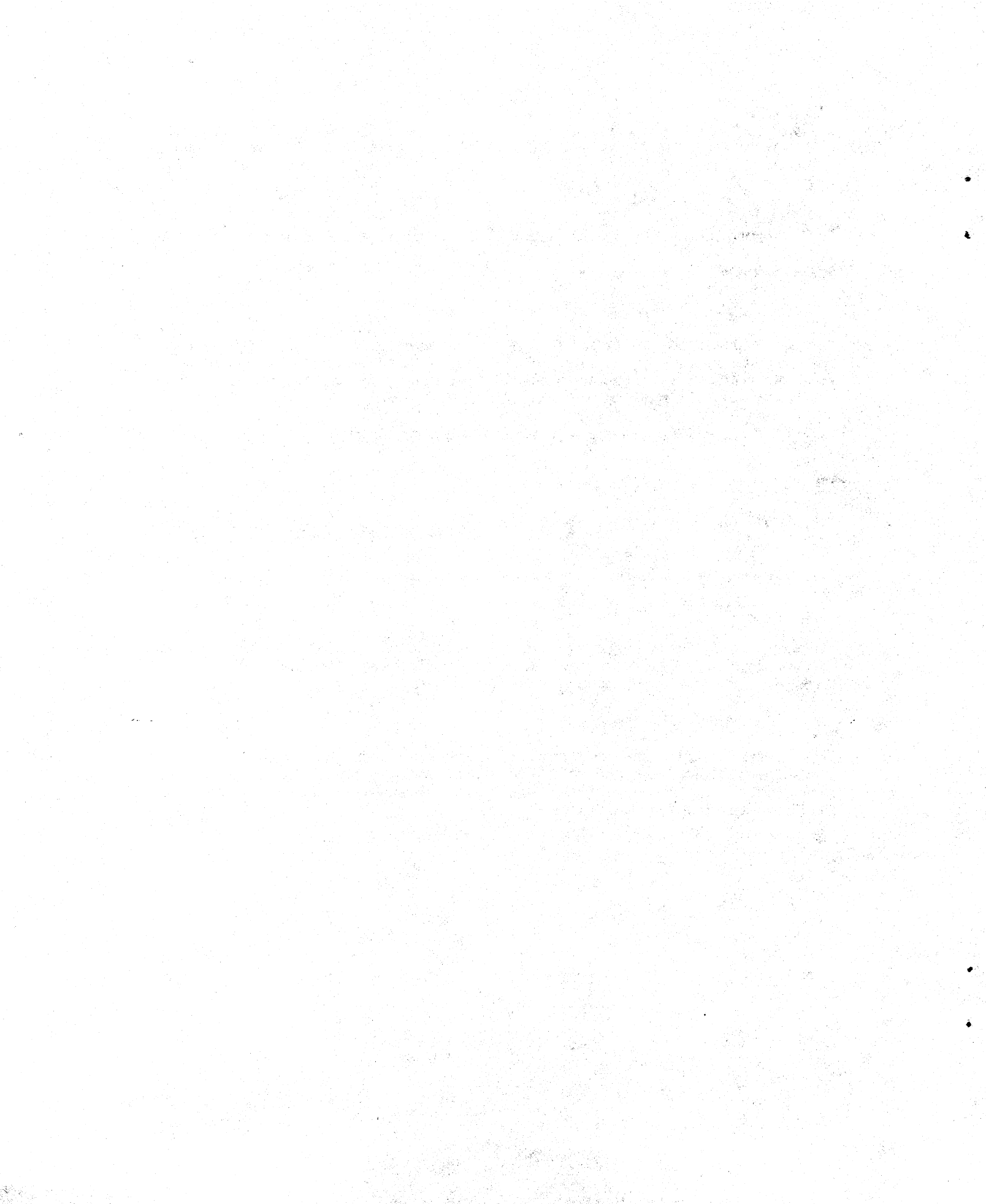
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1. Name and APX number of program _____

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 and/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 software)
_____ 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 software or user instructions:

_____

_____

_____

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|     |
|STAMP|
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