

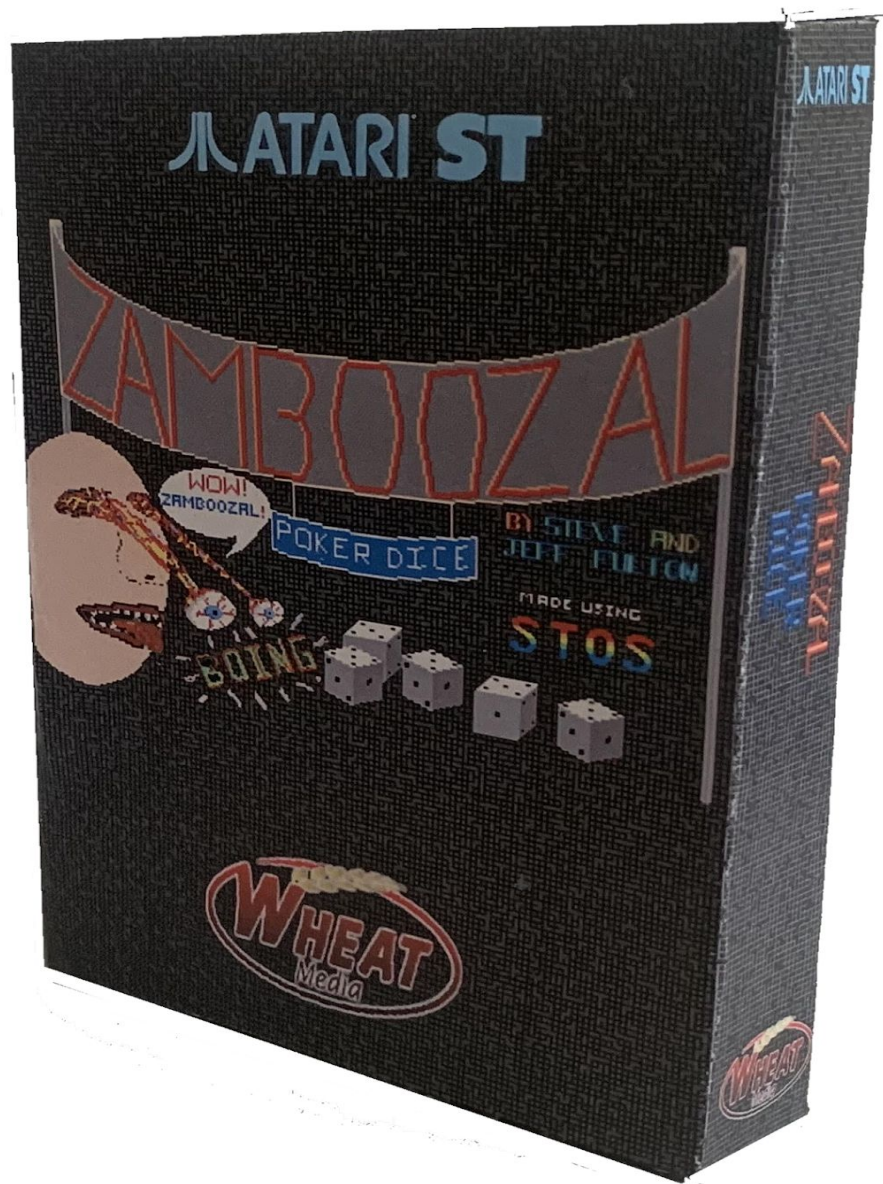


Zamboozal

Poker Dice!

For Your Atari ST Computer





Covers versions 1.0 (1989) and 1.2 (2020)



Limited Warranty

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Wheat Media warrants the diskette on which the enclosed program is recorded will be free of defects for 30 days after purchase. Wheat Media makes no warranties, either expressed or implied as to the software program recorded on the diskette. That program is provided as-is with no warranty what-so-ever. This means if the game sucks, sorry, you own it! The software store you bought this from most likely does not accept returns of opened packages. Why? Because there is a good chance you and/or your friends are dirty software pirates who like to buy games, copy them, then try to return them. Furthermore, if you are reading this, you already opened the package and are out of luck. However, if you have access to a shrink-wrap machine, then you might get away with re-wrapping it and trying for a return. Good luck and God-Speed.

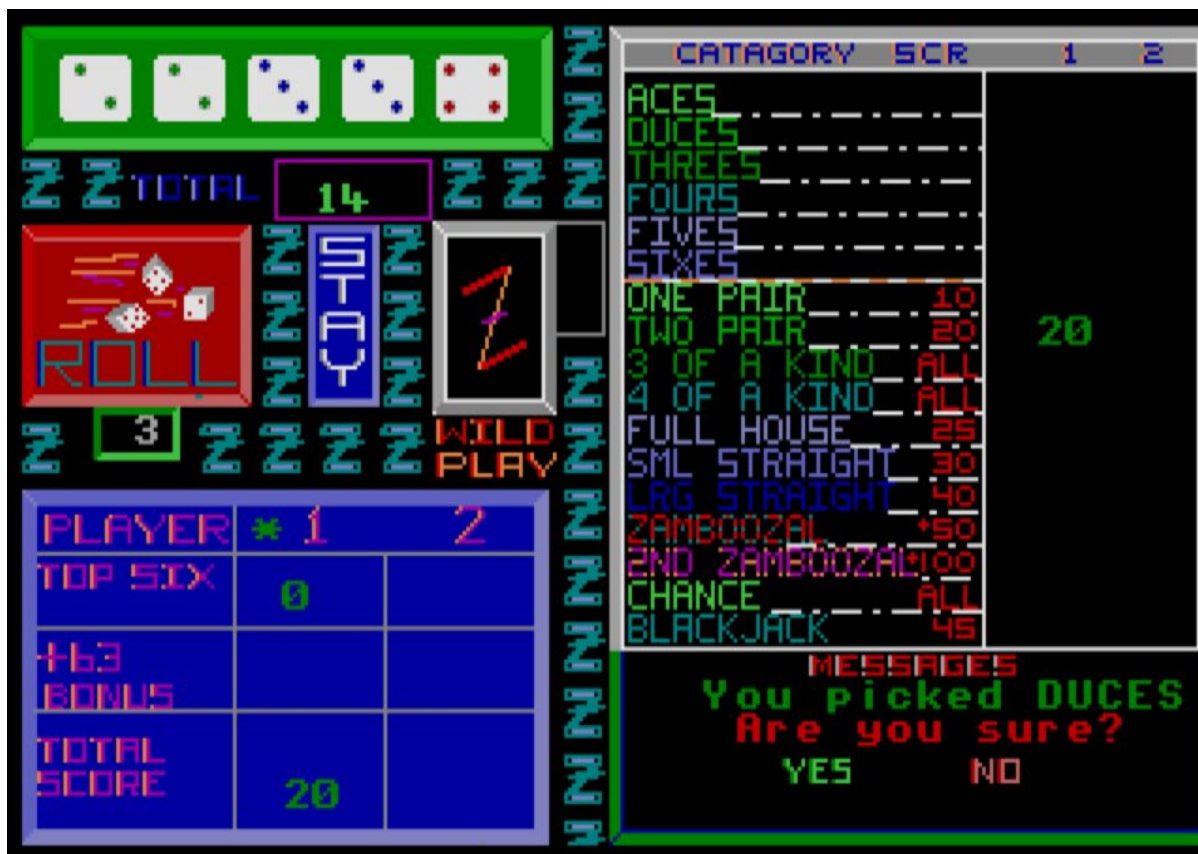
Requirements

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The enclosed software program is designed to run an Atari ST brand computer. It requires at least 512K of memory, a disc drive, color monitor, mouse and the TOS 1.02 operating system. If you are running an STE computer, the 1.2 version may be the only one that works for you. Check the manual that came with your computer to make sure your system is compatible before calling customer service. Most problems are user-error and not the fault of Wheat Media, its employees,



leadership or shareholders. If there is a problem with the game, you can lay blame squarely on the lame coders who made it. You can find their names on the credits page in the back.



Acknowledgements

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This game was made using the STOS The Game Creator released in 1989 by Mandarin Software, developed by JAWX. We, the programmers, were compelled to program games ever since playing Atari Asteroids in 1979. Books like "Dr. C. Wacko's Miracle Guide" for the Atari 8-bit helped us learn the basics of programming when we were tweenagers, but it wasn't until we were fumbling around in college in 1989 and STOS



arrived for the Atari ST that we really got moving on the dream to make video games.

STOS combined a simple-to-learn BASIC programming language, sprite editor, sound designer, and a compiler. The whole system allowed neophyte coders to finally turn our/their ideas and creations into honest-to God compiled Atari ST games!

However, tools and desire are not the only ingredients needed for success, and as you will see with the final 1.0 version of Zamboozal Poker Dice you are holding in your hands, sometimes the final product, no matter how hard someone works, maybe, should never see the light of day.

2020 Version Updates

The 1.2 2020 version has been updated to work with all TOS versions. We have also updated some of the music and sounds.

Introduction

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Zamboozal Poker Dice from Wheat Media (which by the way, was our joke-name for a fake company in high school, then the name of our two-song rock band, the name of this one-game company, and one day became the name of our first short-lived web design firm) is an exciting new take on the classic game of poker dice. The game is for one or two players. Each player takes turns rolling a set of five dice and attempts to make “poker” hands based on the number rolled. On their turn, the player gets the opportunity to roll the dice three times. After each roll, the player can choose dice to reroll. The others will remain unrolled. The objective is to make a poker-hands



with the dice. After the third roll the player must choose a poker-hand to which they will apply their dice. With one exception, “Second Zamboozal”, all “poker hands” can only be used once.

“

Look, don't get too excited, it's basically Yhatzee with a few more options

-Our sister

”

Starting A Game

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Put the Zamboozal Poker Dice diskette into your compatible Atari ST 3.5 inch disk drive, and click the floppy disk icon that represents the where you inserted the disk (this is usually Floppy A or Floppy B).

Note: Zamboozal Poker Dice includes no copy protection,

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and so the files can be installed on a hard disk drive (such as the Mega-File 20). To install on a hard disc drive simply copy the files from the enclosed Zamboozal Poker Dice Diskette to a folder on the hard disk drive. I suppose this also means you can easily upload the game to your favorite BBS you dirty software pirate.

We have tested version 1.2 on all TOS versions and on both Gem DOS, IDE, and ASCII hard drives hooked up to a real ST/STE and both Hartai and STEam emulators.

When you see the program file named **zamgame.prg** (for the 1.0 versions, **zam2020.tos** for the 1.2 version), double-click, and prepare to experience the absolute wonder that is Zamboozel Poker Dice!.

“

Look, this was our first real compiled game and we were just excited to have Something finished. Sue us, we were still teenagers and it was 1989.

-Programmers

”

The title screen will appear next. **Do not be shocked.** Yes. This is the title screen. This is what happens when a couple of twin brothers with a lot of ambition but very little talent attempt to make their first game.



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See “Second Game theory” at the end of the manual for more information.



After a few seconds this second title screen will appear. We couldn't decide which one to use, and one of us (me) really liked this “Zamboozal man” character so we put him here. Also, this screen has a 2nd logo not related to the one on the title screen.

Did you read the note about warranties back on page 1? Yeah, this one of the things we were referring to.

Click the **left** mouse (1.0) button or press a key (1.1) to start the game. The main game screen will load-up, and a message will appear asking you to choose the number of players.

It's quite possible that, back in the 80's you might have had another person there with you to play this game, so if you have a time machine and 1989 is your target year, have at it! Otherwise you are probably emulating this game on a laptop computer or you finally got a surplus 1040 STE running in your garage. Either way, there is an



almost 100% chance you are alone, so don't kid yourself, just choose 1 player. When you do You will see a confirmation box like the one below:



Nearly every choice in the game is followed by a confirmation box such as this. I supposed we were trying to be user friendly and wanted to make sure all aspects of the game could be confirmed by the user? What if real life was like that? What if all of your choices came with a confirmation box that let you think twice before committing? Maybe I would have taken computer science, or played college soccer if I had been prompted by a pop-up modal dialog box to think twice about the snap decisions of my youth. Hey, did someone mention a time machine? Anyway, these damned confirmation boxes are all over the place and I won't mention them again.

“

Kip, I reckon... you know a lot about... cyberspace? You ever come across anything... like time travel”

-Uncle Rico, Napoleon Dynamite

”



Rolling The Dice

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Click on the big **ROLL** button to roll the dice. You will be clicking with a mouse pointer that looks like a pencil.

Why “a pencil” you ask?

Well for two reasons:

1. Because in physical games of poker dice, you use a pencil to record your score on a scorepad.
2. Because we had the ability

to change the mouse pointer into a cool graphic, and so we painstakingly drew a pencil just for you. I hope you like it.

After clicking, you will see an animation of dice rolling in the lower-right corner of the screen. We were really proud of this animation back in 1989, and I still think it looks pretty cool. Anyway, the final roll of the dice will appear in the top window, sorted numerically from lowest to highest.

Selecting Dice To Reroll

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After you roll, you have the chance to select dice to reroll. Simply hover your mouse-cursor-pencil over the die you **don't want to keep**, and click the left mouse-button. The die will turn into a multicolored block. If you make a mistake, click again and the die will re-appear. If that was a second mistake, then click again, and the box will reappear. Keep doing this until you get really bored and want to move onto the next step.



Click the **Roll** button to roll the dice you selected. On your second roll you have the option to select some or all of the dice to reroll again. After your second reroll, you must choose a hand to apply your dice.

You do not have to roll three times. At any time you can click the **Stay** button, and apply your dice to a poker-hand on the score sheet.

Apply The Dice To A Poker Hand

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When you click on one of the poker hand options on the score sheet, you will be presented with a screen that asks you “Are You Sure?”



I know I said I wouldn't mention these annoying screens again, but this one is important. You really should think about the hand to which you will apply your dice. See “Strategy Tips” for some things to consider.

If you click Yes, your score will appear and your turn will be over.

Scoring Options

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The options for scoring in Zamboozal Poker mostly follow the rules of poker.



CATAGORY	SCR	1	2
ACES			
DUCES			
THREES			
FOURS			
FIVES			
SIXES			
ONE PAIR	10		
TWO PAIR	20		
3 OF A KIND	ALL		
4 OF A KIND	ALL		
FULL HOUSE	25		
SML STRAIGHT	30		
LRG STRAIGHT	40		
ZAMBOOZAL	+50		
2ND ZAMBOOZAL	+100		
CHANCE	ALL		
BLACKJACK	45		

The top six scoring options are for multiples of the same die (1,2,3,4,5,6). A score above 63 in this section will net the player a bonus on their score card.

The next section is filled with options for various specialized poker hands.

- **One Pair:** Use this option when you have at least two dice with the same value*
- **Two Pair:** Use this option when you have two sets of dice each with the same value*
- **Three Of A Kind:** Use this option when you have at least three dice with the same value
- **Four Of A Kind :** Use this option when you have at least four dice of the same value
- **Full House:** Use this option when you have three dice of the same value, and the other two dice of a different same value
- **Small Straight:** Use this option when the you have at least four dice with consecutive numbers (1,2,3,4) (2,3,4,5) (3,4,5,6)
- **Large Straight:** Use this option when all five dice are in succession (1,2,3,4,5) or (2,3,4,5,6)
- **Zamboozal:** Use this option if all five dice are the same!
Getting a Zamboozal will start an animation sequence that can only be described as “sublime”. While it’s not very good, it was still maybe the highlight of the first 10 years of my attempts at programming.



-
- **2nd Zamboozal:** Use this option for 2nd Zamboozal. Don't use it for the first. If you do you will get zero points. If you do get a 2nd Zamboozal, you will be “treated” to the above mentioned animation one more time. Enjoy.
 - **Chance:** This is fallback space. You get points no matter what are on the dice. Your score is the sum of the dice. Use it wisely.
 - **BlackJack:** This is a special space for playing a hand of Blackjack against the computer. See the special options section for details.

Special Options

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Aside from the new scoring option on the score sheet, Zamboozal Poker Dice includes a few other new surprises for anyone familiar with the classic game of poker dice.

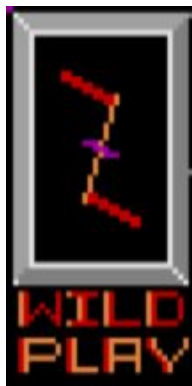


The **BlackJack** hand plays like a short, interactive version of the casino card game of the same name, where 21 is the

best score possible. Keep an eye on the **Total** displayed below your dice. When it's near or exactly 21, click **Stay** (if you are on your first or second roll) then click the Blackjack option on the score sheet. The infernal program will ask you if “you are sure”, but since there is no “bloody hell of course!” option, just click “yes”.

The computer will now roll the dice. You will see the dice animated in the lower window. If the total score of your dice is higher than that of “the dealer” (and 21 or under) you win! Otherwise, you get “zilch”





Another new addition in Zamboozal Poker Dice is “Wild Play” “Wild Play” gives you a second chance after your third roll. You only get to use Wild Play once during a game, so make it count. When you click **Wild Play** the possible awards of “+5 top top score, +10 to total score, Roll Again, and Zilch” appear randomly. “Roll Again” is usually the best outcome, as it let’s you get one more chance at getting that perfect Poker hand you are trying for.

A Note On The Sounds

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If you are playing the game along with these instructions , no doubt you have heard a few things coming from your computer speaker that either gave you pause or made you jump in your seat. Don’t worry, that spectre you and the local Vicar drove out a few years has not returned. It’s just the game, silly!

Like I stated in the acknowledgements, when we made this game back in 1989, we used a very cool program named “STOS the Game Creator” published Mandrain Software and developed by Jawx. STOS made our dream of making this game a reality, for which we are truly indebted. One of the cool things about STOS was that it had an optional sound digitizer called STOS Maestro that would let a developer record their own sampled audio to use in the game. As you may or may not know, sampled audio can take-up a lot of space on a 3.5 inch 740K floppy disc. We had big plans for this game and, save for a few system sounds, nearly every sound you hear was digitized by a couple of neophytes with absolutely zero experience with sound editing! I’m not sure why, but we used the absolute minimum size for sounds (8kbps) and it shows. We probably did this to conserve space That out-of-tune guitar? That’s me strumming. That “arghh!” you hear when you get a zero score, that’s my brother.



When we realized that the game would only top out at about 160K compiled, we planned to update the sounds, but then tragedy struck. The STOS Maestro cartridge stopped working, and we didn't have the money to replace it. We just decided then to go with what we had so we could get the game completed

There is no option to turn-off the sound, but you can always reach over to your ST monitor and turn the sound off, or put on some headphones. Your choice. We are truly sorry.

(note: If you are running the 2020 released version 1.2 of this game, some of the sound warping has been fixed and music has been swapped-out. It turns out it wasn't just low-quality samples that were the issue. It was the mouse-interrupts. If you moved the mouse while playing sounds, it would slow their play-back)

High Score

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At the end of the game you will get the chance to enter your name and a quote if you happen to have beaten the high score. Since there are only only two known disc images of Zamboozal in existence you might see a screen that looks like this:



The current high score of 522 was set in late 1991 by my brother Jeff. The score is nearly impossible to beat; I know, I've tried off and on for the last 30 years. If you do beat it, and you care enough, please send me an email steveafulton@gmail.com. I'd love to see it.

Note: In the 1.2 2020 version Jeff has replaced the High Score with one that is lower and easier to beat.

Strategy Tips

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- You do not need to use all three of your rolls. If you have good dice on the first or second roll, click Stay and get your score!
- If you have the dice for a Small Straight, but have more rolls, always keep rolling the single die that is not in the small straight, in case you can make a large straight.
- Keep your eye on the die total. If you have 21, hit the Blackjack right away. That is 45 points you don't want to miss.
- Try to save the Chance option for the last possible moment. It's a nice fallback for when you are going for that elusive Zamboozal
- Aces and One Pair are good spots to leave a "zero" as a last resort
- Save Wild Play as long as you can. Near the end of the game it could be an invaluable resource to help fill some of those harder spots on the score sheet.

Coming Soon

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Coming Soon From Wheat Media in the 1990's!

- **Oxygen** : A furious shoot-em-up battle with the Periodic Table Of Elements itself!



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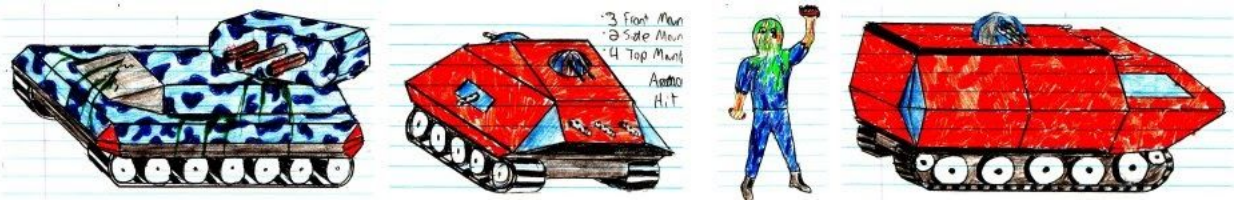
- **Gumpha Racing** : A Space themed “horse-racing” simulator.



- **The Legend Queen Califia** : A Role-Playing game set in California. Battle myths, legends, and history itself to discover the treasure buried at the heart of the Golden State.



- **“RPG 1987”** (working title) : A Modern Day Role Playing game. Battle the forces of evil and their alien overlords to free the world from their dastardly clutches. (design sketches)



Note: None of these games were ever finished. The limitations of our skills with STOS and the real-world implications of needing to find our place in the world, both combined to end our ST game careers before they got started. “Zamboozal Poker Dice” was finished in 1989, but very few people ever saw it. The code and game were buried within the mounds 3.5 inch disks boxes that held our other Atari ST software.

Not long-after, we traded up our Atari 1040 Atari ST for DOS/Windows 386DX-40. While we planned to continue learning to program and make games for DOS, the system just did not feel as fun or creative as the Atari ST once did. In time we gave-up on game development, realizing that the “want” and “desire” to make games, while important, cannot fully replace “talent” and “skill”.



In the mid-1990s, the world wide web emerged. Early web sites were a combination of simple graphics plus HTML and CGI coding. Those technologies were perfect for our small but growing set of software development skills. In some ways, it felt like the experience of programming 8-bit and 16-bit computers in the 80's prepared us directly for the connected world of the 90's World Wide Web. Animated GIFs were nothing more than the types of multi-frame animations we made for Zamboozal on the ST. The event-based programming in STOS was a perfect primer for the GUI, user-centric world of the web.

While *Zamboozal Poker Dice* itself never amounted to much, as it turned out, the experience of making that game was invaluable for our future.

Around the year 2000, my twin brother and I were both working at Mattel Toys, making consumer web sites for their various brands like Barbie and Hot Wheels.

At the same time, a little animation plug-in for web browsers named Macromedia Flash was taking hold of the internet. Kids were moving in droves from PC based edu-tainment games to browser-based Flash games.

We found ourselves at the right place and the right time to finally make our game development dreams come true. We formed a game development team out of web programmers, took the initiative, and proved we could make games for the web sites. In the beginning, the games were not always things we wanted to play ourselves, but that did not matter. We used those projects to get better and better at our craft. In time, and after a lot of practice, making web games became a truly satisfying and successful endeavor. In all, as senior developers and development managers, we were involved in the creation of over 200 web games for Mattel and other properties over a 12-year span. We added even more web and mobile games after starting the web site 8bitrocket.com dedicated to teaching people to program in Flash and make their own indie web games.



Here are just a few of the many games we created in that era:



‘Your first game will probably suck’ I thought, ‘but your second will be a little bit better’

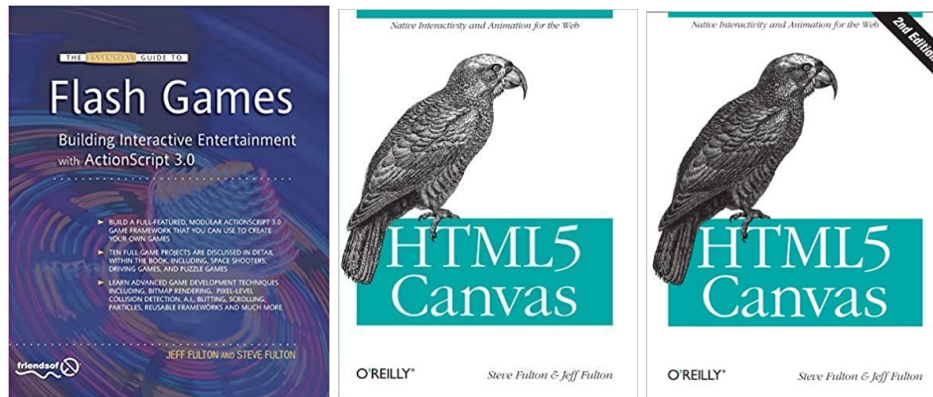
-Steve Fulton, The Essential Guide To Flash Games

”



Second Game Theory

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The experience of using Flash made our video game aspirations finally come-true, and it also led us to writing several books on game development in the early part of the 2010's

In many ways, these books themselves were inspired by STOS and the tools we used to help us take the first steps towards our dream of programming games. We had finally done what we set-out to accomplish in 1979, and we wanted to show others how to do the same thing.

When I wrote the introduction to our first book The Essential Guide To Flash Games, in 2010, the experience with Zamboozal weighed heavy on my mind. I wanted to convey to the reader how important it was to never give up, and that it was very important to take what you learn on your first game, and pour that knowledge and experience into the next, something that never happened with Zamboozal Poker Dice. "Your first game will probably suck" I thought, "but your second will be a little bit better". After some time thinking I arrived at what I called "The Second Game Theory". This is what I wrote:



Second Game? What about the First? Well of course, you need to make your first game, but inevitably your first game will not be all that you hoped it to be. It just happens. Don't blame yourself. You will cut features for time, get frustrated, and sometimes not even finish. However, this is the most important thing we want you to do: Finish your game, and move onto the second. It is the only way you will get better at making games.

This is the Second Game Theory.

This book is set-up in a way that we believe will help you finish a game and move onto your Second game. It is important to us, as developers and teachers of Flash/Flex/Game Design/Game Programming that developers actually finish their games. We love to play great Flash games online. Every time you finish a game, no matter how good it is , you get a little bit better at your craft. When you get better, we get better games to play. We get more innovative games to play. The craft of making online Flash games advances a little bit more. Your job is to finish something and move onto the next project. Move onto your Second game. Your Third game, etc.

However, your First game should not be considered a prototype, a beta or an alpha version. It should be considered a finished product. If not, you will always be stuck on your First game, and can lead to development hell: a place where games are tortured to death and never finished.

We believe that making games in an iterative process, and it comes at two levels. First, the process of making each individual game is iterative. You code your game, refine it, code it, refine it, over and over until you mold something that you finally finish. However,



the actual craft of making games is also iterative. With each game you finish you improve your code, processes, libraries, object models, game ideas, game designs, etc. That is why it is so important to get to your Second game. Writing your Second game means you will improve on your first, which can then be improved by your Third, etc.

When I wrote that, I was thinking directly about Zamboozal, and how the experience of making that game and not continuing onto a second set-me-back for a decade. The key is this: “keep going!” Even if you start with a well-intentioned but terrible dog like “Zamboozal Poker Dice”, it doesn't mean it will be your only or last shot. If it's what you really want to do, don't stop..

In a few cliched but still ever useful words: Never give up.

That may sound trite and stupid, but It's also true. Unless you are lucky or rich, no one is going to hand you what you want out of life. You have to treat every opportunity as a chance to do what you truly want to do.

If you keep at it you may find yourself writing a fake instruction manual for your first real game, 30 years down the line. You will enjoy every word you write as you recall those first steps you took to create something and put it into the world. You will smile to yourself knowing that while that game might not have turned out as you wanted, it became the cornerstone of an unexpected and satisfying future you could have never predicted if you tried.



Code Review in 2020

We took a long hard look at the code for this game in September of 2020. The original 1.0 version was completed 31 years ago and we had not even taken a peek at the code until now.

The basic code was actually pretty well written for novice programmers in 1989, given it's in basic. Much of the code uses reusable Gosubs where necessary.

The music code was created to be able to play multiple samples in a row and change the key to create sampled music. So a single guitar strum was turned into a "song"? In version 1.0. This a STOS Maestro function that was pretty cool, BUT the mouse slowed the sample play. If you try the original 1.0 version, you can hear the notes distort when the mouse is moved. Since this game uses the mouse, it created a problem that we mostly cleaned up by adding newly sampled music that we have created specifically for the game using ACID on the PC and exporting out as 8bit RAW sample from Audacity.

We also created a modified title screen with the new version number, but left Steve's original design of Zamboozal Man's eyes bugging out intact.

The game uses some interesting extensions. First, of course, it uses the great STOS Maestro extension, but it was really difficult to find a compiler version to use in a re-compile. Luckily We found it an old disk because it was not available any place else. The Squasher plug-in is also used for the externally loaded screens. This came on the Games Galore retail package and the compiler extension was also difficult to find, so it too came from an old disk too. We have placed them both up for download in our new site:

<https://intotheverticalblank.com/2020/09/27/missing-stos-extension-files-found/>



Credits

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Ian Legler: Current president and co-founder of Wheat Media. He now works as a Software Development Manager at Microsoft. Ian still has his original Atari 2600 hooked-up to a TV.

Brandon Crist: QA and playtesting. Brandon is currently an aspiring novelist and teaches high school journalism and English. Brandon would still play Gateway To Apshai on his original Colecovision if he still had it, but instead he is going on a 20+ year-long game of Diablo 2.

Jeff Fulton : Zamboozal programmer and artist. In 2013, After finishing his third book on game development co-written with his brother (“HTML 5 Canvas 2nd Edition”) Jeff moved into the realm of web ecommerce where he works as a software architect. Jeff is currently building homebrew Atari ST games in his spare time.

Steve Fulton: Zamboozal Programmer, Artist, writer of fake game manuals : In 2013, After finishing his third book on game development co-written with his brother, Steve returned to Mattel Toys where he works in connected toy design, software architecture, artificial intelligence, and extended reality. Steve is now programming homebrew Atari 7800 games in his spare time.



Hear us In The Vertical Blank! (our podcast)

<http://www.intotheverticalblank.com>





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