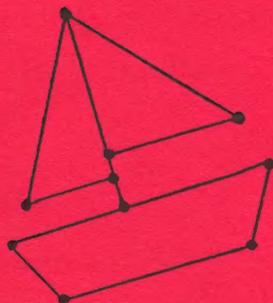
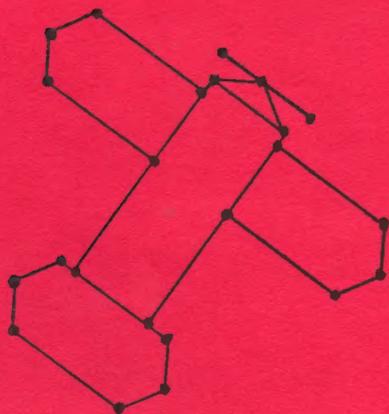


D.O.T.S



ALPHA
SYSTEMS

DOTS

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INTRODUCTION

Learning With DOTS

Playing with DOTS is a fun way for children to practice reviewing number and letter orders. Because DOTS permits children to create and save their own pictures, it stimulates learning in a number of areas. For example, children will learn to identify shapes and objects, in order to name the pictures they draw. They will learn to classify groups of objects, in order to name the sets of pictures they decide to save. And, of course, they will learn how to S-P-E-L-L the names!

Parents, or older brothers or sisters, can design sets of pictures to serve as learning aids for younger children. Older children will want to test their skills by drawing more complicated pictures, like three dimensional objects. To do this, they must experiment with locating lines on a flat surface, a task which requires careful concentration!

Overview

Dots contains about 30 dot-to-dot pictures to play with immediately after loading the program. You can use your own pictures, after you have drawn and saved them.

When play begins, a picture is displayed on the screen as a pattern of numbers or letters. Each number or letter represents a dot. Using a joystick to move the "Happy Face" cursor, your task is to connect each dot in the proper order. When you successfully connect all of the dots in a picture, (or the computer has connected them for you), the ATARI reveals the picture's name.

Auto-Play Feature

After DOTS has loaded and the Main Menu is displayed, the computer will wait two minutes. If no keys are pressed, the game begins playing itself. The computer will display a dot-to-dot picture, connect the dots, and display the name. It will repeat this process until you stop it.

To stop the Auto-Play:

1. Press the "R" key. The program will return to the Main Menu.
2. Select an item from the Main Menu as described in the "Using the Main Menu" section.

GETTING STARTED

DOTS Requires at least 32K of memory and one joystick, plugged into joystick port #1.

Loading DOTS

1. Be sure your disk drive and computer are set up properly as described in your manual.
2. Turn the disk drive power ON.
3. When the BUSY light goes out, insert the DOTS disk into the drive, and close the drive door.
4. Turn your computer ON.

The game will load automatically, and a welcome message will be displayed on the screen.

Problems

1. If the disk drive does not begin running, review steps 1-4 and try again. Also, refer to the manual which accompanied your disk drive.
2. If the screen says "BOOT ERROR", be sure the disk in drive #1 is the DOTS disk. If it is, the disk may be damaged. Try it on a friends system. If it still doesn't work, refer to the instructions in the warranty in the back of this booklet.

PLAYING WITH DOTS

Once you have loaded the program, a welcome message appears, and a minuet by J.S. Bach plays. If you wish to skip the music, simply press START when the welcome screen begins to blink. After the minuet finishes (or the START key is pressed), you will hear a spoken message, and then the Main Menu is displayed on the screen.

The Main Menu

The Main Menu will present you with five options:

- D DRAW A PICTURE
- P PLAY A GAME
- L LOAD AN ALBUM
- S SAVE AN ALBUM
- C CLEAR PICTURES

Pick the item you want by pressing the key corresponding to the first letter of the items name (D,P,L,S, or C).

About Albums

DOTS stores pictures in groups called albums. When the DOTS program is loaded, the album of 30 or so pictures that comes with the game is loaded in automatically. You can use any album you have made. When an album is loaded, all the pictures in that album are stored in the computers' memory.

When you draw a new picture and name it, the ATARI computer will store that picture in memory. After the picture is saved in the computers' memory, the screen will be erased. When you are through drawing, all the pictures you have drawn will be in the computers' memory. To save them permanently on disk, you must follow the instructions in the "Save an Album" section.

Draw A Picture

Select this option to draw new pictures.

1. If you plan to save your pictures on a disk, be sure you have a blank, formatted disk ready BEFORE you begin using Draw A Picture.

2. Load the DOTS program as described earlier. Check to see that a joystick is plugged in to slot #1, and the TV volume is turned up.

3. Press "D" to select Draw A Picture. A window of colorful D's appears briefly on the screen. The screen background becomes blue, and the Happy Face cursor appears. When the Happy Face blinks off, a small dot appears. When you are plotting dots for your pictures, this dot shows exactly where the dot will be located when you press the fire button. This comes in handy for very precise drawings.

At the bottom of the screen, the Draw A Picture Mini-Menu is displayed. You can use these Mini-Menu items whenever you need to, whether or not the Mini-Menu is on the screen.

4. Pick letters or numbers to label each dot. The Mini-Menu tells which you are using. To use letters, press the "L" key. To change back to numbers, press the "N" key.

NOTE: You may use either letters or numbers, but not both in the same picture. If you do not specify which to use, DOTS will use numbers. Any picture made can be displayed later, with the Play A Game option, using either letters or numbers, regardless of which you chose to draw the picture with.

5. Move the Happy Face, with the joystick, to the spot on the screen where the first dot is to be. Press the trigger. The dot appears, is labeled, and a musical note sounds.

6. Move the joy stick to the spot where the second dot is to be. Press the fire button. A dot appears, is labeled, and a musical note sounds. A straight line appears connecting the previous dot and the new one. Repeat these steps until your picture is finished. You are allowed up to 26 dots.

7. When the picture is finished, press "K" to use the "Keep Picture In Computer" option of the Mini-Menu. The following message appears:

Name your picture, then press RETURN

=>

8. Type in a name for your picture. The name can be up to 20 characters long, and may contain any characters you want (Gloria, 1004 Clark St., ** A SURPRISE !!! **, etc.).

9. After typing in a name, press RETURN. The picture will disappear from the screen, but will remain in the computers memory.

You can erase the name one letter at a time with the DELETE/BACKS key. Once you have pressed RETURN, you cannot change the pictures name.

The pictures you "KEEP" inside the computer will stay there. They will be erased if (1) you select the "Clear Pictures" option from the main menu, or (2) the ATARI computer is turned off.

10. To draw another picture, return to step 4 above. If you no longer want to draw, press "R" for the "Return To Main Menu" option from the Mini-Menu.

You can plot two dots in the same spot, plot dots without lines connecting them to the previous dot, erase a single dot, erase the picture completely, or print the picture.

PLOT TWO DOTS IN THE SAME SPOT - This makes it possible to draw shapes that start and end in the same place. To plot a new dot on

top of another dot, position the Happy Face over the dot that is already there, and press the fire button. A note will sound, and a line between the previous dot and the current dot will appear. This dot will now have two labels.

PLOT DOTS WITHOUT LINES - This makes it possible to draw a picture with two or more separate shapes. To do this, position the Happy Face where you want your new dot to be. Press the Space Bar instead of the joystick trigger. The dot will appear, and a tone will sound, but no line will connect it to the previous dot.

ERASE A DOT - To erase the last dot you have plotted, press the DELETE/BACKS key once. The picture will be redrawn without the last dot. To erase more dots, press the DELETE/BACKS key once for each dot you want to erase.

ERASE A PICTURE COMPLETELY - TO erase the picture entirely, press the "E" key for the "Erase Picture From Screen" option on the Mini-Menu. The following message appears:

Erase the screen Y/N ?

If you want to erase the picture, press "Y". The picture disappears, and the Happy Face appears in the center of the screen. If you press "N", the picture will remain, and the Happy Face will appear in the middle of the screen.

NOTE: Erasing a picture is irreversible. If you select this option, the picture will be erased from the screen, and it will NOT be saved in the computers' memory. To blank the screen, but keep the picture, refer to steps 7-10 above.

Problems

If the computers' memory is full, instead of the "Name your picture" prompt you will see the following error message:

No more room in the computer

To correct this problem:

1. Follow the directions in the "Save An Album" option.

2. Follow the instructions in the "Clear Pictures" option.

3. Redraw the picture.

Play A Game

This is the Main Menu item you select to connect the dots on pictures already drawn.

1. Decide what kind of album you want to play with, and follow the instructions for that kind of album.

ORIGINAL DOTS PICTURES - These are the pictures that came with your game. To use them, press the "P" for "Play A Game" option. Go to step 2 below

PICTURES YOU DRAW YOURSELF - These are pictures you haven't drawn yet, but want to. To play with these:

- a. Select the "Clear Pictures" option.
- b. Select the "Draw A Picture" option.
- c. Draw your pictures.
- d. Select the "Play A Game" option.
- e. Go to step 2 below.

PICTURES YOU HAVE ALREADY DRAWN AND SAVED - This is an album you have saved. Select the "Load An Album" option. After you have loaded your album, select the "Play A Game" option. Go to step 2 below.

2. To select the "Play A Game" option from the Main menu, press "P". A window of colorful P's is displayed. Then the screen turns green, and a Mini-Menu appears at the Bottom.
3. Choose letters or numbers to label the dots. The Mini-Menu indicates which you are using. To select letters, press the "L" key. To return to numbers, press "N". If you do not

specify, DOTS will use numbers as labels.

4. Decide who will play.

If YOU want to play:

- a. Press "P" to select the "Person Connects The Dots" option from the Mini-Menu. A randomly selected picture appears on the screen. The Happy Face begins to blink in the center of the screen.
- b. Using the joystick, move the cursor to the first letter or number in the sequence. If it's correct, Happy Face turns green and a note sounds. If it's not correct, nothing happens. Try again.
- c. Continue until the picture is complete. When the final dot is connected, the picture is completely redrawn very quickly without labels, and the name is revealed.
- d. If you want the computer to find the next dot, press the fire button. The Happy Face moves to the next dot, and flashes twice, while two beeps sound. Then it returns to it's previous location and waits for you to guess again.
- e. If you want to stop connecting the dots before you finish the picture, press "R" to "Return to the Main Menu".
- f. To play again, return to step 3.
- g. To print a picture, refer to the "Print A Picture" section.

If you want the COMPUTER to connect the dots:

Press the "C" key for the "Computer Connects the Dots" option from the Mini-Menu.

The computer is now in the Auto-Play mode described

earlier. It will display a picture, connect the dots, quickly redraw it without labels, and display the name. It will do this until you tell it to stop.

There are two ways to stop the computer from connecting the dots.

TO CONNECT THE DOTS - Press "P". The Happy Face stops where it is and begins to blink. It will wait for a person to finish the dots.

TO RETURN TO THE MAIN MENU - Press "R". The picture will disappear, and the Main Menu will appear on the screen.

Problems

If there are no pictures in memory, the Mini-Menu will not be displayed. Instead you will get this error message:

There are no pictures in the computer

Use L or D from Main Menu to Get or Draw pictures

Return to step 1 and begin again.

NOTE: The ATARI randomly selects pictures from the album in its memory. If a picture has been displayed once, and you want to view it again, you have two options. First, you can wait until the computer has displayed all the pictures in the album, and starts the album over. Or, you can start the album over, by pressing "R" to "Return to the Main Menu" and then "P" to "Pay A Game". You may still have to wait several turns for the picture you want to appear.

Load An Album -

This option is used to when you want to play with pictures that have already been saved on a disk.

1. Press the "L" key to select the "Load An Album" option from the Main Menu. When you press "L", a window of many colored L's appears. Then this message appears:
Are you using a cassette recorder Y/N?

When this question appears, always type a "N". This option is disabled on the disk version of DOTS.

Once you have typed a "N", the following message appears:
Place ALBUM disk in Drive #1 and press RETURN.

2. Put the album disk in Drive #1, close the door, and press RETURN. The drive will begin running, and the following message will be displayed:
Load ALBUM called [an ALBUM name appears here] Y/N?

This is the first album on the album disk. If this is the album you want, go to step three. If you do not want this album, press "N". Your computer will display the same message with the name of the next album. Repeat this until the computer displays the album you want.

If you do not choose any of the albums on the disk, the following message is displayed:

You have replied N for all ALBUMS on the disk.

To try again with another disk, return to step 1.

3. If you want to load the album whose name is on the screen, press "Y" for YES. The disk drive will begin to run, and load the album into the computer. Then this message appears:
Good load of picture album

In a few seconds, the main menu will appear on the screen.

PROBLEMS

If the disk in the disk drive does not contain any DOTS picture albums, this error message will appear on the screen:

There are no ALBUMS on the diskette

Once you have a disk with DOTS albums on it, repeat step 3 above.

If the Atari computer is having difficulty reading the disk, you may get an error message. Try these suggestions.

ERROR CODE IS 138

This error indicates the computer is not receiving signals from the disk drive.

1. Check that the disk drive is turned on and properly connected to the computer.
2. Check that the drive is set to drive #1 as described in the DOS Reference Manual.

ERROR CODE IS 144

This means that the computer is unable to read the diskette. Make sure the album disk is in drive #1, and the drive door is closed. If this doesn't work, the diskette is damaged and cannot be used.

Save An Album

Select this option to save an album of pictures.

1. Be sure you have a formatted disk to save your album on.
2. Press "S" to select the SAVE AN ALBUM item from the main menu. A window of colorful S's will appear on the screen. Then the following message will appear:

Are you using a cassette recorder Y/N?

When this message appears always type a N. This option is disabled on the diskette version. Once you have pressed "N", the computer will say:

Name of the ALBUM to save to disk

=>

When you see this message, type in the name of your album. It must be a legal file name (as described in your DOS Reference manual). It must not be longer than 8 characters, and the first character MUST be a letter. Also, you CANNOT use the file name "extenders", that is, the three-letter suffix file names sometimes have. After you have entered the album's file name, press RETURN.

The computer will then say:

Place ALBUM disk in Drive #1 and press RETURN

Insert the disk you want the album to be recorded on into drive #1. Be sure this disk has already been formatted (see the DOS reference manual). Then close the disk drive door and press RETURN. When the album has been saved, the computer will say:

Good save of picture file

PROBLEMS

Sometimes the file cannot be saved to the disk. When this happens, you may get one of the following error messages. Try these suggestions.

ERROR CODE IS 138

This means the Atari computer is not receiving any signals from the disk drive.

1. Check to see that the drive is correctly connected to the computer.
2. Be sure the disk drive power is on.
3. Check to see that the disk drive number is set to #1.

ERROR CODE IS 144

This means the computer cannot write on this disk.

1. Be sure the disk is in the disk drive, and the disk drive door is closed.
2. If the disk is in correctly, check to see if the disk has a write protect tab on it. If it does, and you want to use that disk, remove the write-protect tab.
3. If there is NO write-protect tab, the disk is not properly formatted, or it may be defective.

ERROR CODE IS 162

There is no more space on the disk. Use another disk that has plenty of free space.

ERROR CODE IS 165

The album's name is not permitted. Enter a legal file name.

Clear Pictures

The Clear Pictures option erases all of the dot-to-dot pictures currently kept in the computer's memory. Use this option when you want to draw new pictures, but do not want them to be kept with the pictures that are now in the computers memory.

1. Press the "C" key to select this option from the main menu. A window of multi-colored C's appears. Then the following message will be displayed on the bottom of the screen:

Clear all pictures in the computer Y/N?

2. If you DO want to clear all the pictures, press "Y" for YES. The following message will appear:

The pictures are gone.

After a few seconds, the Main Menu will appear on the screen.

3. If you DO NOT want to clear all the pictures, press "N" for NO. You will see this message:

The pictures are not gone.

After a few seconds the Main Menu will appear on the screen.

If you reply "N" to the "Clear all pictures Y/N?" message, the pictures will remain intact. They will stay inside the computer until:

1. You use the Clear Picture option, and reply "Y", or
2. The computer is turned off.

PROBLEMS

If there are no pictures in the computers memory, you will see the following message:

There are no pictures to clear

You have already used this option. You must draw more pictures, or load an album before you can use this option again.

PRINTING A PICUTRE

If you own an Atari 1020 Color printer, you can print paper copies of your DOTS pictures. You can print the completed picutre, or you can print just the dots, and finish the picture yourself.

1. Be sure your printer is attached to the computer system correctly as described in the manual which accompanied the printer.

2. Be sure the printer is turned ON.

3. If you want to print a picture you have not yet drawn:

- A. Select the Draw A Picture option from the Main Menu.

- B. Draw the picture. Follow the steps described in the Draw A Picture section of this manual.

- C. Go to Step 5 below.

4. If you want to print a picutre from the album currently stored in the computers memory:

- A. Select the Play A Game option from the Main Menu.

- B. Press "C" for Computer Connects The Dots from the Paly A Game Mini Menu.

- C. Let the computer display picutres until the one you want to print is displayed.

D. Press "P" for Person Connects The Dots to stop the computer from playing.

E. Proceed to Step 5 below.

5. To print only the numbers or letters and the dots:

A. If you are printing a picture you have just drawn, press and hold the OPTION button after you have drawn the picture, but BEFORE "keeping" it in the computer's memory. The printer will begin to print.

B. To print a picture from the Play A Game option, press and hold the OPTION button anytime during play with that picture. The printer will begin printing.

6. To print the completed picture:

A. If you are printing a picture you just drew, press and hold the SELECT button after you have drawn the picture, but BEFORE "keeping" it in the computer's memory.

B. For a picture you have displayed with the Play A Game option, press and hold SELECT anytime during play with that picture.

7. When you press the SELECT button, the following message appears:

Specify pen color number

1 Black 2 Blue

3 Green 4 Red

8. Choose the color you want the picture to be drawn in by pressing the number that corresponds with your choice.

Special Markings

Pictures that you draw yourself by following the dots have special markings to help you draw the picture. This is a description of the markings and what they mean.

RED NUMBER OR LETTERS

Red numbers or letters indicate dots which are not to be connected to the previous dot. When you see a red dot, do not draw a line to that dot. Lift your pencil, place it on the red dot, and continue following the dots.

SHORT DOTTED LINE

When you see a short dotted line connecting a letter or number to a dot, draw your line to the dot, not the letter or number. Sometimes the dots are so close together, the printer cannot print the label next to the dot because there is no room. So, the letter or number that corresponds to that dot will be placed to one side, and connected to the dot with a dotted line. Connect the dots, from dot-to-dot, not from label to label.

GROUPING PICTURES INTO ALBUMS

An album is a collection of one or more pictures purposely grouped together. The pictures may or may not have a common theme. For younger children, this aspect of DOTS is very educational. After they compose a set of pictures, they must decide what to name the WHOLE ALBUM! This is good practice at recognizing common attributes of pictures they drew.

Briefly, here are the restrictions on grouping pictures.

1. You can only ADD pictures to an album. You CANNOT SUBTRACT them. If you are drawing boats, save them on your BOAT album. You cannot save them on your FLOWERS album, and move them later.
2. You cannot combine two albums together. The only way to add pictures to a saved album is:
 - A. Load the Album using the "Load An Album" option.
 - B. Draw the pictures, using the "Draw A Picture" option.
 - C. Save all the pictures now in memory as a new album.

For example, a child might want to draw a set of three houses. To do this, he would:

1. Select the "Draw A Picture" option.
2. Draw the house, "Keep" it, and name it. Perhaps call it "My House".
3. Draw more houses, and "Keep" and name them, perhaps "Grandma's House", and "My Freind's House".
4. Save all three pictures as an album, using the "Save An Album" option.

5. Name the album, maybe "HOUSES3".

Suppose the child decides that houses are just the beginning, and wants to compose a larger album, of the three houses, plus two other architectural marvels -- a church, and an office building. She would:

1. Load the HOUSES album, with the "Load An Album" option.
2. Select the "Draw A Picture" album.
3. Draw, "Keep", and Name the buildings.
4. Select the "Save An Album" option.

Now, he has an album with three houses, plus two other buildings. Since the name HOUSES no longer fits, it needs a different name, perhaps BLDGS.

By saving the album with three houses, a church, and an office building, ~~as a~~ different album, now he has two albums, one with HOUSES and another, broader category, BLDGS. This helps the child to cultivate organizational and planning skills. More houses, say a cottage, a cabin, and a mansion, can be added to the HOUSES album. Or, other buildings, such as a barn or a store, can be added to the BLDGS album.

