

GRAVITAR GAME OVERVIEW AND LOGISTICS

This copy is a demo, and presently uses OS/A+. Boot disc with no cartridges and the program will auto-run.

The first display will be the name "GRAVITAR" and the three top scores along with the players initials. This is a permanent high score record that is updated every game. Below this, various information including input prompts and disk error messages will be displayed.

The object of the game is to visit hostile planets, destroy their gun positions and steal their fuel for your own use. When the gun positions have been destroyed the player exits the planet at top of screen. This completes the planet and it is no longer displayed on the planet field display. When a field of planets is destroyed another will be loaded from the disk, obviously the next set will be more challenging.

START begins the game with the first planet field. Each field consists of a sun and six planets. Displayed at the top are the score, fuel remaining, player ships remaining, planet bonus value and the score required for a bonus ship.

Beside each planet is a bonus value for the planet, the lower the bonus the easier the planet. The bonus value is the maximum points that can be earned by completing the planet. If a planet is left before all the gun positions are destroyed all gun positions and bonus values are restored. The planets of the first field will also become more difficult reflected by a new, higher bonus value.

There are two ships that track the player; contact with them is lethal. This type of ship is not equipped with guns. They are destroyed by your fire or by contact with the sun. Once destroyed they will not reappear until you return to this display. If they are lured into the sun no points are awarded but the danger they present is gone.

Movement is accomplished in the usual fashion. The player ship is rotated to the desired direction and the thrust button produces an acceleration in that direction. Shots fired exit from the nose of the player ship only. The player's ship is affected by the sun's gravity and the usual laws of motion. The player also has a permeability shield. When on, an enemy shell can pass through the player without damage. If turned off while a shell is passing through, the player is destroyed. Both the shields and thrusters consume fuel which must be replenished by taking the enemies fuel depots. If the player's fuel tanks get low an audible warning is heard. If they reach empty the game is over no matter how many player ships remain.

When the player makes contact with a planet the display changes to the planet's surface with the player high above it. The player's ship is now affected by the planet's gravity which can be either negative (down) or positive. The strength of gravity is a function of degree of difficulty.

The surface of the planet is green; even a soft touch on it will destroy the player's ship. Most planets are implemented as a length of surface area bounded by mountains. It is, therefore, not possible to travel in one direction and eventually return to the starting point, a mountain would first be encountered.

The enemy gun positions are red. Their fire direction is random, while the fire rate is a function of random and degree of difficulty. Contact with it is deadly.

The fuel depots are blue. To onload fuel the players ship must contact the depot. It can not be destroyed by either the players or enemies shots.

There are enemy ships on most planets. Their movement is essentially lateral and is constant in that axis. They will adjust their altitude (within bounds) in an attempt to impact and destroy the player. Their agressiveness is a function of degree of difficulty.

If a planet is completed whose bonus value is greater than one or more planets remaining in the planet field, these lesser planets are increased in difficulty and their bonus values are increased to 9000.

Each planet field contains a reactor planet. This one differs in that it is run on a time limit. The player must reach the reactor core, shoot it, then work his way back to the entrance within the time limit. If the time limit expires before the planet is completed, the reactor explodes, destroying the players ship. When this planet is completed the player is awarded 10,000 points for every planet remaining in this planet field. Bonus player ships are also awarded according to the score. The player progresses to the next field of planets.

When all the guns on a planet have been destroyed, the message "MISSION COMPLETE" will be displayed at the top of the screen. As long as guns remain on the planet the sound of their shots will be heard.

When the game ends (all ships have been destroyed or fuel exhausted) and if the players score is among the top three scores, the player is prompted to enter his/her initials. The character is selected with the left/right buttons (stick) and entered with the fire button when found. This is a permanent record stored on the disk.

This game can be played with a joystick but the player will not be able to thrust and apply sheilds simultaneously. Control will be more precise and the game would retain the arcade "feel" by using an arcade type switch arrangement.