

by
Robert T. Bonifacio

**A 10 level, exciting and challenging game designed in 16K RAM
for the Atari® 400/800/1200™ Personal Computer Systems.**

GAMES WORTH PLAYING

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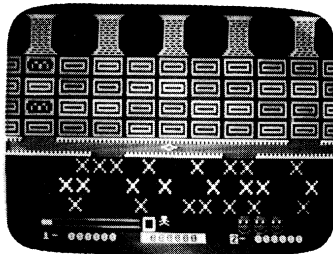


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INSTRUCTIONS



MELTDOWN

AT MEGALOPOLIS

(One or Two Players)

by Robert T. Bonifacio

OVERVIEW

It is the middle of the night at the Megalopolis nuclear power generating plant. In the stillness of the control room, all hell has just broken loose. Eight flights above, in five reactors and the monumental machinery surrounding them, there is something terribly wrong. The coolant system is failing, the cores are boiling dry, and unless the tremendous heat of the nuclear reaction can be dispersed, the reactors may begin to melt.

Your assignment is to reach each reactor in time, remove the uranium rods and return them to safety. You must evade layers of radioactive mist and clouds, dash through a corridor containing bolts of atomic energy, and then through a series of moving rooms (most of which disappear after you exit) until you reach the reactors. Here you enter the containment chamber, extract the rods and move them to the lead safety vault by returning through the same hazardous course. Deactivate all five reactors before the temperature gauge reaches 5200°F and you are challenged by five new reactors with varying risks. Ten different screens with ten levels of difficulty.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 1.) The MELTDOWN AT MEGALOPOLIS cassette or diskette.
- 2.) Atari® 400™ or 800™ or 1200XL™ computer.
- 3.) Atari® 410™ cassette program recorder or Atari® 810™ disk drive.
- 4.) Joystick controller for each player.

LOADING THE PROGRAM

MELTDOWN AT MEGALOPOLIS is a machine language game program and therefore does not use a BASIC cartridge. It is designed in 16K RAM and is loaded by the following steps in exact order:

CASSETTE VERSION

- 1.) Turn off the Atari® 400/800/1200XL™ and remove all cartridges from the program cartridge slots (including game cartridges and BASIC cartridge). This game will not load if any cartridge slots are occupied.
- 2.) Connect the cassette recorder to the PERIPHERAL jack on the right hand side of the computer. (Make certain the recorder is as far removed from the TV set or monitor as possible.)
- 3.) Make sure that the cassette is completely rewound to the beginning of Side 1. (The tape pack should appear on the left side when looking down into the cassette window.) Place the cassette in the recorder and press the PLAY button. Note: If you experience any difficulty loading the program after completing step number 7, try again. A back up copy of the program is available on the other side if you flip over the cassette and rewind it to the beginning.
- 4.) Push the yellow START key on the right of the Atari® and KEEP IT DOWN.
- 5.) Turn on the computer. It will beep once to let you know it is ready to load the tape. When it beeps, release the START key.
- 6.) Press the RETURN key on the keyboard. The cassette player will begin to run and the program will load. It will take several minutes to complete loading because of the length of the program. If you like, you can turn up the TV volume to hear the loading process and verify that all is proceeding correctly.
- 7.) When the entire program is loaded, the cassette player will stop automatically and you will be ready to begin the game. You should rewind the cassette and put it back in the box.

DISKETTE VERSION

- 1.) Turn off the Atari® 400/800/1200XL™ and remove all cartridges from the program cartridge slots (including game cartridges and BASIC cartridge). This game will not load if any cartridge slots are occupied.
- 2.) Connect the disk drive to the PERIPHERAL jack on the right hand side of the computer. (Make certain the disk drive is as far removed from the TV set or monitor as possible.)
- 3.) Turn on the disk drive and insert the diskette. Close the disk drive door.
- 4.) Turn on the computer. The program will automatically load and run in a few seconds.
- 5.) When the entire program is loaded the disk drive will stop automatically and you will be ready to begin the game. You should turn off the disk drive, remove the diskette and put it back in the box. (Do not place the diskette on the computer or TV set as their electrical fields may damage the program recording.)

NOTE: It is essential with both versions of MELTDOWN AT MEGALOPOLIS that you start with the computer turned “off” and with no program cartridges in the computer cartridge slots (left or right).

USING THE JOYSTICK CONTROLLERS

Plug a joystick controller into jack 1 for 1-PLAY or plug two joysticks into jacks 1 and 2 for 2-PLAY. Hold the joystick with the red button in the upper left corner, towards the TV set.

You can move your player in four (4) directions; up, down, left and right. To move your player, push the joystick in the direction you wish to move and then let the joystick re-center before you make another move.

GAME HINT: Very rapid player movement can be accomplished by developing a technique of “tapping” the joystick with the fingers rather than holding onto the handle with the entire hand.

PLAYING MELTDOWN AT MEGALOPOLIS FOR THE FIRST TIME

After the program has loaded into your computer, you will see the title. The title

will stay on the screen for a few seconds, and then the game screen will be displayed with the following words vertically in the center:

OPTION – ONE PLAYER
SELECT – RESTART

You are now set to play in the one player mode. Plug a joystick into port 1 and press either the START key or the red “fire” button on the joystick to commence play. If you wish to play a two player game, plug a second joystick into port 2 and press the OPTION key once. OPTION – TWO PLAYER will appear on the screen. Now press the START key, or the red “fire” button on joystick number 1 and the action begins. Since MELTDOWN AT MEGALOPOLIS is a 10 level game, you may wish (after you have developed some proficiency at the lower levels) to start at a more difficult level or to continue the game from the highest level you were able to attain. By pressing the SELECT key once, SELECT-RESTART will change to SELECT-CONTINUE. In this mode you may select in which level you wish to begin or you will be allowed to continue play from the highest level you attained before total destruction. To select a higher level starting point, press the joystick handle in any direction before starting the game. Each press of the handle will display a new screen (0 thru 9). Commence the game wherever you choose.

As the game begins, a man will appear at the bottom of the screen. Your assignment is to get him safely into one of the nuclear containment chambers at the top of the screen, remove the radioactive uranium rods and return them safely to the bottom. Each time you perform this feat successfully the reactor you entered will disappear and the horizontal temperature gauge (lower left of screen) will decline to give you some additional time. Complete this assignment with all five reactors before the temperature reaches 5200°F (top of gauge) and you will be off to the next level and five new reactors. Complete all ten levels and you have saved Megalopolis!

You begin by moving your player safely through three layers of radioactive mist and clouds. Touch anything in this area and you are incinerated! After evading this danger you may enter a narrow corridor leading to the moving chambers. There are two entrances and two exits to the corridor. Unfortunately, this

corridor is periodically charged with a random bolt of atomic energy caused by the overheating reactors. You will hear the bolt coming and the corridor will flash before it appears. Don't let it get you or . . . poof!

Now you enter the moving chambers leading to the reactors. You may move left, right, up or down in this area, but you will be destroyed if you touch the edge of the screen. Every time you leave a moving chamber (up or down) it will disappear, making ensuing trips up and down more difficult, since you cannot enter an area vacated by a chamber. In each of the four rows of moving chambers, there is a "safe" chamber marked with an "M" which will not disappear when you exit. If you are able to navigate up and down using only "safe" chambers, you will receive a 1000 point bonus; however, the computer will then randomly remove a chamber from each row. You can keep earning bonus points throughout the entire game.

You have four players to complete your mission (you receive a bonus player for each 10,000 points you earn) and each level must be completed before the temperature gauge reaches the top. Plan your strategy carefully and good luck!

GAME HINT: The reactors on either edge of the screen are the most difficult to enter or exit. Try to get them first before you have lost too many moving chambers.

END OF GAME

The game will be over if you lose all your players or if you allow the temperature gauge at the bottom left of the screen to reach the top (that's 5200°F, the melting point of uranium and meltdown for your nuclear power reactors!).

SCORING

You receive 10 points every time you move your player through a layer closer to the reactors on the way up and through a layer on the way down. Upon reaching the reactors you receive 200 points, and when you reach the bottom safely you receive an additional 200 points. If you use only "safe" chambers (marked "M") on your trip up and down, you will receive a 1000 point bonus. Each time you complete a level (all 5 reactors) you get 1000 points. Player 1 score is displayed on the lower left, and Player 2 on the lower right. High score is displayed in the lower center of the screen and is updated every time a player is lost.

BONUS PLAYERS

You will receive a free “bonus” player for each 10,000 points that you earn. Extra players are represented by faces in the bottom right corner of the screen. The most players that you can have at any one time is four.

OPTION KEY

The OPTION key controls the number of players that are allowed to play. Pressing the OPTION key before the start of the game will change the players from one to two. If you press the OPTION key during play, the game will end and OPTION and SELECT will be displayed on the screen.

SELECT KEY

The SELECT key controls whether or not you start at the first level (RESTART) or continue from the last level attained (CONTINUE). By selecting the CONTINUE mode, you may also choose the level you wish to play by moving the handle of joystick no. 1.

START KEY

The START key will start the game or restart it if it is pressed while the game is in play. The red “fire” button on joystick no. 1 will also start the game, but only if the game is over, and not during play.

THE DISPLAY

PLAYER 1 SCORE	Bottom left
PLAYER 2 SCORE	Bottom right
TEMPERATURE GAUGE	Horizontal above Player 1 score
LEVEL (0 thru 9)	Right of temperature gauge
HIGH SCORE	Bottom center
EXTRA PLAYERS	Faces above Player 2 score

IF YOU CANNOT LOAD THE PROGRAM

- 1.) Check to make certain there are **no cartridges** in the computer cartridge slots (including the BASIC cartridge or any other program or game cartridges).
- 2.) Check your equipment carefully to be sure that all cables and connections are correct and tightly inserted.
- 3.) Re-read the section in the manual about loading machine code programs from cassette tape and diskette. Try to load again.
- 4.) If you can adjust the volume and tone settings on your recorder, try different settings.
- 5.) If possible, load another program from a tape or diskette you know works on your computer. This will prove that your equipment works. Try once more to load your game.
- 6.) The normal reason cassette tapes will not load is tape recorder head misalignment. Your computer may be able to save and load programs on its own recorder, but be unable to load tapes made on a different recorder for this reason. Be sure that your tape recorder heads are properly aligned. Your local computer store or dealer can help with this.
- 7.) If the program still cannot be loaded, send the cassette or diskette, with a description of the problem (what the computer displays on the screen, if anything, when you try to load the program or play the game) and what you did to try to correct the problem.

Defective cassettes or diskettes will be replaced at no charge.

WARRANTY

This article will be replaced if found to be defective in material and/or workmanship within 90 days of purchase. This shall constitute the sole remedy of purchaser and the sole liability of manufacturer. To the extent permitted by law, the foregoing is exclusive and in lieu of all other warranties or representations whether expressed or implied, including any implied warranty of merchantability or fitness. In no event shall manufacturer be liable for special or consequential damages.

PROGRAMMER BIOGRAPHY – Robert T. Bonifacio

At 17, Robert has already designed his second computer game “best seller.” Following “AZTEC CHALLENGE” which has sold so well that it is being converted to also play on Commodore® and Texas Instruments® computers, Robert has delighted skillful game players and reviewers with the incredibly challenging “MELTDOWN.” Besides being a super talented programmer, Bob is also a champion arcade game player.

“I like to design video games,” he says, “because it’s fascinating to create something that can only exist in the computer and never in real life. And I’m also still trying to program one I can’t beat.” That sounds a little frightening for those of us who are looking forward to his next, soon to be released game, “THE E FACTOR.”

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