

BIBLIOGRAPHY

If you are interested in checkers on a more than casual basis, the following books are recommended:

Ainslie's Complete Hoyle, Tom Ainslie (Fireside)

The Complete Guide to Checkers, Tom Wiswell (Collier Books)

Secrets of Checkerboard Strategy, Tom Wiswell (Simon & Schuster)

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*A checkers game for the
TI-99/4A and Myarc Geneve 9640*

By Chris Bobbitt

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Classic Checkers

By Chris Bobbitt

INTRODUCTION

Checkers is a descendant of prehistoric path games, and as such is one of the oldest games still played today. Unfairly, it is often derided as a game for children. Checker enthusiasts of all ages, however, recognize that people who feel this way are confusing complexity with depth.

Checkers is simple to play compared to Chess (a game of similar lineage). But while it can be quickly picked up, it can take a lifetime to master. Checkers can be a war of attrition, a quick blitzkrieg, or a game of stealth. In short, it is a game that has all the strategic elements usually associated with Chess or other complex war-games, yet uses something as down-to-earth as round pieces on a square of tiles. It is elegant in its simplicity.

Classic Checkers strives also to be elegant in its simplicity - to allow you to play checkers either against the computer or against another opponent with a minimum of fuss. We hope you agree.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Classic Checkers requires a TI-99/4A with 32K, a disk system, and either TI Extended BASIC or the Editor/Assembler module. The program can be controlled from the keyboard, with joysticks, or with an Asgard Mouse.

The program will also function from the GPL Interpreter mode of the Myarc Geneve 9640. This version is not compatible with any other mouse.

Next, the program asks you if you wish to play with the <K>eyboard, <J>oysticks or the <M>ouse. Press the key of the letter in quotes. In a single player game, if joysticks are selected joystick 1 is used. In a two player game using joysticks, player one uses joystick 1, and player two uses joystick 2. In a two player game using any other device, both players must use the same keys or mouse.

The program will then clear, and present the complete checkerboard. When playing with either the keyboard or joysticks a green square will appear. This is the "pointer", and is used to first select a checker to move, and then to select its destination. With the *Asgard Mouse*, the "pointer" is shaped like an arrow, and is used in the same basic manner. The following chart illustrates the desired pointer movement and the corresponding action that must be made with each device:

Motion	Joystick	Keyboard	Mouse
Up	push up	press E	roll up
Down	push down	press X	roll down
Left	push left	press S	roll left
Right	push right	press D	roll right

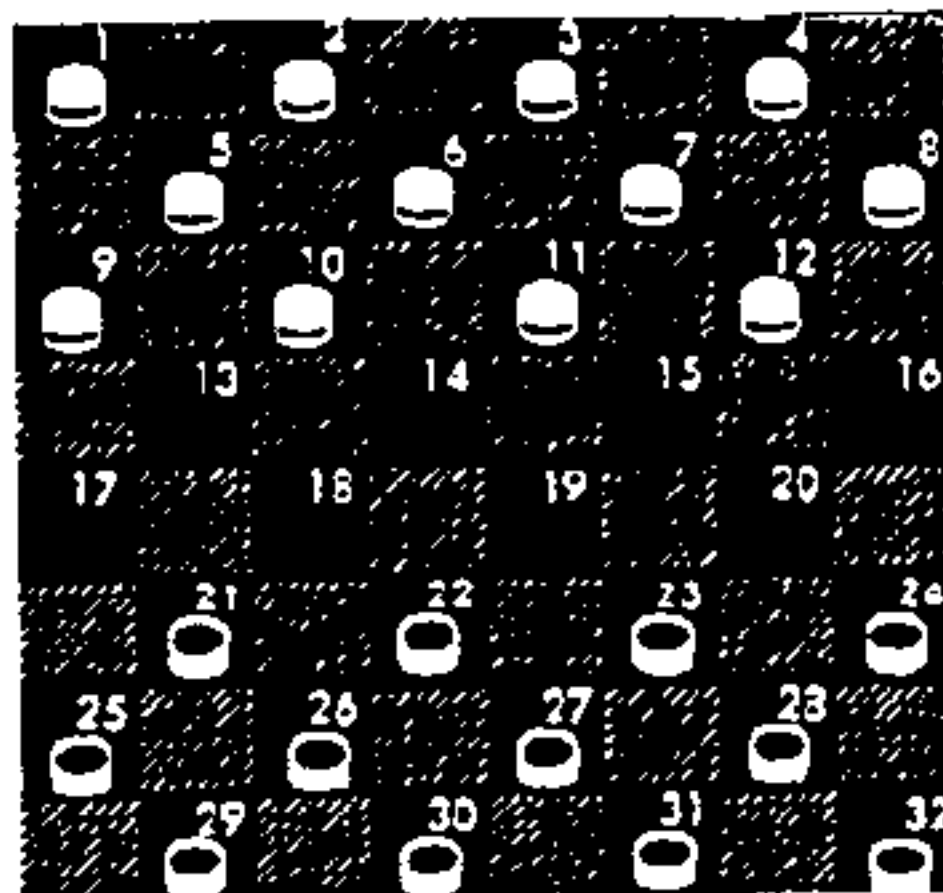
To select a piece to move, or the location to move a selected piece, with the joystick press the "Fire" button, with the keyboard press <ENTER>, and with the *Asgard Mouse* press the left mouse button.

When a checker is selected it is marked with a purple dot to remind you that it is selected. The program then expects you to select a legal move for that checker. If you changed your mind about moving a specific checker, simply select an illegal move - the game does not allow you to enter an illegal move and "un-selects" your checker if you do so.

When the game is over, you'll be asked if you wish to play again. Press <Y> to do so, or <N> to Quit.

CHECKER STRATEGY

While most people are familiar with the idea that there are famous opening moves in Chess, only dedicated Checkers players are familiar with famous opening moves in Checkers. Below are some opening sequences for checkers you may want to try - move the pieces to and from the squares indicated:



Alma

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 8 to 11
5. 3 to 8

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Glasgow

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 8 to 11
5. 11 to 16

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Old Fourteenth

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 8 to 11
5. 4 to 8

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Extended BASIC

1. Place the Extended BASIC module in the cartridge port and turn on the peripherals and the computer
2. Place the *Classic Checkers* disk in disk drive one, press any key to advance beyond the Master Title Screen, and select Extended BASIC at the computer's Main Menu
3. The program will automatically load and run. HFDC/RAM-DISK users note that the program is designed to load only from DSK1 when loaded in this manner

Editor/Assembler

1. Place the Editor/Assembler module in the cartridge port and turn on the peripherals and the computer
2. Place the *Classic Checkers* disk in disk drive one, press any key to advance beyond the Master Title Screen, and select Editor/Assembler at the computer's Main Menu
3. Select option #5 - "Load and Run". Type **DSK1.CHECKERS** at the filename prompt and press **<ENTER>**
4. The program will automatically load and run.

RULES OF CHECKERS

If you aren't familiar with the game of checkers (sometimes known as 'draughts'), the following description excerpted from Ainslie's Complete Hoyle (please see bibliography) is of interest:

"By tradition, black moves first, although some decide first by drawing lots or flipping coins. Pieces move diagonally one space at a time to unoccupied squares. If the square is occupied by an opposing piece and the square beyond is unoccupied, a jump and capture may be made."

"Captured pieces are removed from the board. Multiple captures can occur at a single turn."

"If a piece can capture an opponent, it must do so. If a multiple capture is possible, it must be completed. If a player can capture with more than one of his men, he is allowed to choose which capture to make at a particular turn - but a capturing move is always made in preference to a non-capturing one."

"When a checker reaches the last row (the king row) on the opposite side of the board, it is crowned or kinged. The opponent places a checker of the same color on it. It is now a king and may move backwards as well as forward, and may even combine backward and forward motion on the same maneuver when multiple capture is involved. However, when a checker arrives at the king row and is crowned, its move ends at once. It may not capture an opposing piece until the next turn."

"A player is defeated when unable to make a legal move on his turn. He may have lost all his pieces or, as sometimes occurs, may be unable to move whatever pieces remain."

PLAYING CLASSIC CHECKERS

Classic Checkers differs little from the definition above of checkers, except for the colors of the game board and the checkers. The layout of the board is identical, however. In *Classic Checkers* the board is composed of red and white tiles, and the pieces are black and white. These colors were chosen for the sake of clarity. In the game, the white pieces always go first, whether controlled by the computer or by a player.

When the program has loaded the board is drawn and a title screen is displayed - press any key to advance beyond it.

The program will then ask you if you wish to play a one or two player game. Press <1> or <2> to select one or the other. If you select a two player game Player 1 is white, and Player 2 is black. In a one player game you play against the computer, and play the black pieces.

Laird and Lady

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 8 to 11
5. 9 to 13
7. 10 to 17

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17
6. 17 to 14
8. 21 to 14

Fife

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 9 to 14
5. 5 to 9

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Souter

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 9 to 14
5. 6 to 9

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Whilter

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 9 to 14
5. 7 to 11

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 22 to 17

Defiance

White

1. 11 to 15
3. 9 to 14

Black

2. 23 to 19
4. 27 to 23