Space Tork documentation

GIHPN - Groupe Informatique HP NIMP v1.04, 15 March 1997

This document explains you how to install and play Space Tork.

Contents

1 Introduction

Space Tork was exclusively programmed at school by Sammy, with Alex and Nopid giving extremely useful advice. Let them be thanked a lot.

Space Tork is a shoot-them-up-and-kill-them-all-so-that-they-won't-be-nasty-any-more. However, as this concept sounded a bit boring to us, we added a race feature : the aim of the game is actually to achieve laps with your spaceship, with aliens trying to stop you, which you have of course to inexpugnably destroy.

Each time you break a record, your time and name are saved in the level file, which you can then swap with your friends. This is a side of the game we wanted to develop.

The other interesting side of the game is its configurability : you can choose how gravity and atmosphere act on your ship, as well as your engine power, resistance to shocks, and so on...

We expect you to enjoy playing Space Tork as much as we enjoyed programming it, and therefore we would be glad if you sent us any of your comments, have they to be complaints or harsh critic.

Thanks for using our software !

all the GIHPN and NIMP membership.

2 How to install and launch Space Tork ?

The only file you have to download to your hp48 is the `ST.LIB` file. Follow the instructions that are in your manual, since the manipulation will depend on the software your are currently using.

Once the file has been downloaded, you have to install the library. Again, refer to your manual. Note that if you are getting short of RAM (especially if you are the owner of an hp48G), you may recall the library in the stack, purge the variable, and then install the library.

```
Technical information :

   library number : 1526
   size (in bytes) and object checksum :
                       first version: 18495.5 / #877h
                        version 1.01: 18406.5 / #C3F4h
                        version 1.02: 18634.5 / #535Eh
                        version 1.03: 18678   / #1963h
                        version 1.04: 18684.5 / #82E6h
```

To launch Space Tork, type `ST` . You can also go to the library menu by doing `left shift + [2]`, then choosing the `[S.T.]` menu label, and finally pressing the first menu key.

The only problem you might encounter is a `Not Enough Memory` error. If this problem was to occur, the only solution would be to free some RAM. Note that Space Tork needs a minimum of 8,100 bytes to run properly. And sometimes it is not enough.

3 Configuring Space Tork

3.1 Space Tork's menus

They are agenced as follows :

- Play Space Tork
- System configuration
  - Fighter name
  - View and control
    - Redefine keys
    - Control
    - S9 System

        * Offscreen mode
    - World attributes
        * Gravity
        * Bounce effect
        * Air resistance
        * Alien's rebirth
    - Ship's properties
        * Engine power
        * Spin speed
        * Recoil
        * Resistance
        * Rebuild speed
- Levels
    - About current level
    - Change level
        * ...
        * ...
        * Next page
- Help and texts
    - About
    - Statistics
    - Help
    - Cheat menu
- Quit Space Tork
    - D'ya really wanna quit Space Tork ? (Yes / No)

You can access a menu by pressing the key letter written beside its title.

There are two ways of quitting a menu : if "`F. Back ...`" appears on screen, pressing `[F]` or `[ON]` will take you to the superior menu. If this option does not appear, you are in an information menu, and pressing any key will take you to the next screen, until you automatically reach the end of the menu.

To configure an option, press the key associated to it. Most of the labels are cycling labels that cycle between {`enabled disabled` } or { `low normal high` }.

Your configuration is automatically saved, so you don't have to reconfigure Space Tork when you play again, as long as you don't purge the `STPAR` file.

3.2 List of the options

Fighter name

Allows you to enter your name, so that any subsequent records will be recorded with this name. Default name is `Sammy`.

Redefine keys

Defines keys for thrust, left, right, fire, shield, pause. Default are `[ENTER]`, `[<-]`, `[->]`, `[.]`, `[SPC]`, `[DEL]`.

Control

Sets the way the keys you press are managed :

- `Standard` : if left xor right are pressed, thrust is ignored.
- `Slick` : if thrust is pressed, it is always taken into account.
- `Sidethrust` : the thrust key is disabled, and the ship accelerates when left and right are pressed.
- `Sidethrust plus` : the thrust key is disabled, the ship accelerates whenever left or right is pressed.

Default is `Standard`.

S9 system

S9 stands for Sammy's superb and sensational super slick and smoothly scrolling screen system. When activated, your ship does not stay in the center of the screen, and moves in a very smooth way. Default is `Enabled`.

Offscreen mode

Turns the screen off when playing, in order to gain about ten percent in speed. What ? A joke ? Well, yes... that's why default is `Disabled`.

Gravity

Sets the gravity level.

Bounce effect

Sets the loss of speed when your ship collides with something.

Air resistance

Well, speaks for itself, doesn't it ?

Alien rebirth

Sets the delay between an alien's death and its reapparition on the screen.

Engine power

Sets the thrust you give to your ship when accelerating.

Spin speed

Sets the speed of the ship's rotation. Note that this option is the only one among the Ships properties / World attributes options which does not affect the computer considering a record is fair or unfair...

Recoil

Sets the recoil of your cannon.

Resistance

Well, the more, the longer you'll live...

Rebuild speed

Sets the speed of the computer giving you extra power, extra ammo and extra shield.

The last nine options are the ones that have the greatest impact on the gameplay. Default is `Normal` for each of them.

3.3 List of other menus

About current level

Gives you information about the artist, the designer, and the name of current level and graphic library.

Change level

Lets you choose another level from the ones currently installed.

About

Gives you some information about us...

Statistics

One of the most funny parts of the help and texts menu : tells you the number of times you started Space Tork, the total amount of time you spent playing, the number of races you finished, the bullets you shot, the aliens you killed, and many, many more...

Help

A quick help telling you the aim of the game.

Cheat menu

Try for yourself...

4 How to play Space Tork ?

Well, you just have to wander about, shoot at aliens on your way, bounce everywhere, and fly through gates.

The playground

Your ship bounces on the black parts of the playground, but, as only its rear end is protected, your are likely to lose power this way. When your power reaches zero, your ship explodes and you lose one life. You start with three lives.

The gates

There are four of them on the playing area. They are lighter than the other elements of the game, so you can spot them easily. Each of them has a number (from `I` to `IV`).You have to fly through them in this order, three times, in order to finish the race. The next gate you will have to fly through is flickering, so it isn't very difficult to find it.

The aliens

There are six little aliens on the screen. The program considers them as part of the playground, and their contact is all the deadlier as they explode whenever they collide with something. When an alien dies, it reappears a short time later. There's also a 'big boss', that is, the mothership that creates aliens. It takes seven shots to be killed, and when it dies, all the little aliens die with it. But they reappear afterwards, so you are not given a big breathing space...

Firing

You may fire one bullet at a time. It explodes when colliding with anything, whatever it may be : an alien, a part of the playing area, or even yourself `d=op`

The shield

The shield makes you unkillable as long as you press the appropriate key. But you rapidly get short of it, so use it with care.

Winning

You win when you have done three turns. The program automatically quits.

Losing

You lose when you have lost three lives. The program automatically quits.

5 Levels and graphic files

Levels and graphic files are Library Data objects for the hp48. Levels are stored in the `STLEV` directory in `HOME`, and graphic files are stored in the `STGFX` directory. There's a program named `WATSDZ?` ("What's this ?" in poor English :) in the library which, given a Library Data, tells you whether it is a level or a graphic file, or even nothing. `WATSDZ?` will also tell you how the file should be stored in order to be recognized by Space Tork.

Levels are stored as `ST******.LEV`, and gfx files as `ST***.GFX`.

There's only one level and one graphic file in the library, because they take some place in memory...

If you want to design levels or graphic types, contact us, we would be glad to send you the official description of all levels. I anyone feels like writing a level editor, I'd be *very* happy !

6 Credits

The first idea for this game came from Gravity Force II on Amiga, a powerful 2-player game which gave me hours of fun dogfighting. Gravity Force II was written by Barf and Mad Lamer of Bits Software (Sweden), and was itself inspired by Gravity Force, written by KingSoft.

Then Barf and Mad Lamer wrote Gravity Power, an enhanced version of GF2, still for the Amiga, and it gave me the idea of writing one for the hp48.

I first called it "Gravity Power hp", but I wasn't happy with such a name. I then called it "Le jeu du p'tit vaisseau" (the little spaceship game), but it was too long. Then I thought of "Space Tork", because of torques, which we would study last year, and which we would hate.

May Barf and Mad Lamer be thanked for what they brought to me.

I would also like to thank Alex, for the constructive critics he made about this game, and for the good ideas he has always had. And I apologize for having not finished DBZ, our first game on hp48, which was to be the best arcade game ever written on hp48... Sorry, I was lazy.

Great thanks to Nopid who spent hours alpha-testing my game, then beta-testing it, and even gamma-testing it when I thought it was perfect (but it wasn't. It still isn't :-)). A great thanks to Nopid too for having opening me the doors of Linux's marvelous world and SGML file format. (NDSam: Eh ! vas-y, te gene pas, mets-toi des felicitations tout seul !!) (NDNopid: Mais c'est ce que je fais mon grand ! ;)) (NDSam: Eh ! Sur un autre ton hein !)

Special **coucou !** and **d=op** for N'Alex, too. (NDNopid: Eh ! it's MY girlfriend ! OK ?)

Also thanks to M. Mortier, our S.I. teacher during year 1995/96, who didn't manage to explain us what a torque really was...

Thanks to M.Marchal and M.Prevot, our physics and French teacher (96/97), who let us play whenever we want. Special **Kraaaaaaaasssss !** to Colette (Maths 96/97) and M.Grenard (Maths 95/96), who don't seem to like hp48s very much... Oh, and the same one to TI92 users ! (NDNopid: and to Casio users too except N'Alex =o))

Also a great, big, enormous, huge **Po vridio !!!!** to Marchadour, also known as "Marchadour ta gueule", for having backed-up on his hard disk the Zip cartridge where I usually put my hp48 backups, for having then erased these files on the cartridge to put crap software on it, and for finally having formated his hard disk, due to what sounded to me like a virus... So you were *sorry* ? Well, *I* am quite **cross**. But who wouldn't be, if all the work he had done on his hp for the last four years suddenly disappeared ? 30Mb of asm programs, of nice GROBs, of impressive animations, of clever maths programs, of... of everything ! Who's gonna pay for that ? Send me a postcard !

Hey ! Imagine what you could have had if I had had the time and if Marchadour hadn't erased all my ideas, all my work, all my sources, all my *life* !!! Hum. Maybe not my life, after all.

> - intelligent (not pre-programmed) aliens - firing aliens - special weapons - other graphics for the ship and the aliens - blast of explosions - level compression - 4-grayscale levels ... and much, much more !

(these ones were only to show you our real superpowers :))

Be happy with what you have, and enjoy playing Space Tork !!!

Sammy and all the NIMP staff and *NOT* Marchadour !

7 Latest modifications

March 3rd, 1997 : version 1.01

removed a little bug ... added the `STVERSION` entry in library updated `ST.DOC`

March 4th, 1997 : version 1.02

removed another annoying bug made `WATSDZ?` and `STVERSION` use the main program's display routines updated `ST.DOC`

March 11th, 1997 : version 1.03

removed what I thought to be the last bug :) updated `ST.DOC`

March 15th, 1997 : version 1.04

made the shield last half the time it used to, because nobody was using the cannon anymore. changed the default keys to Nopid's favourite. But I don't like them. fixed a 'minor' bug which would randomly give you one life less. re-wrote `ST.DOC` in LinuxDoc-SGML format, and renamed it. tried to correct a few English mistakes in this document...

You can get the latest version of Space Tork, as well as new levels (well, when we have finished them...) from *The N'IMP Team website* `<http://www.mygale.org/08/nimp/>`.