



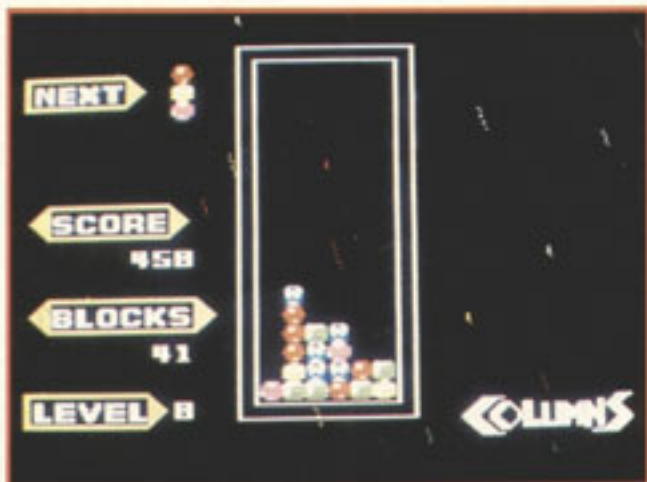
COLUMNS

Oh no! Funny-coloured jewels are falling into a box! Okay, so it's not the most exciting scenario ever, but this is a game of the "classic simplicity" type, such as Tetris and Klax.

The jewels descend in assorted blocks of three, the order of which can be changed as they fall down. When a minimum of three jewels of the same colour are placed together, horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, they disappear - and the jewels above fall down to fill the gaps.

The two-player option means that the players take it in turns to lay jewels in the box, meaning that they inadvertently help each other half of the time. Of course, teamwork is important when the screen is nearly full!

Other options let you change the jewels into alternative shapes such as dice or even fruit. All this is set to a tune similar to the Hallowe'en film theme, for added atmosphere.



▲ *Hit the road Jack....*

BACKGROUND INFO

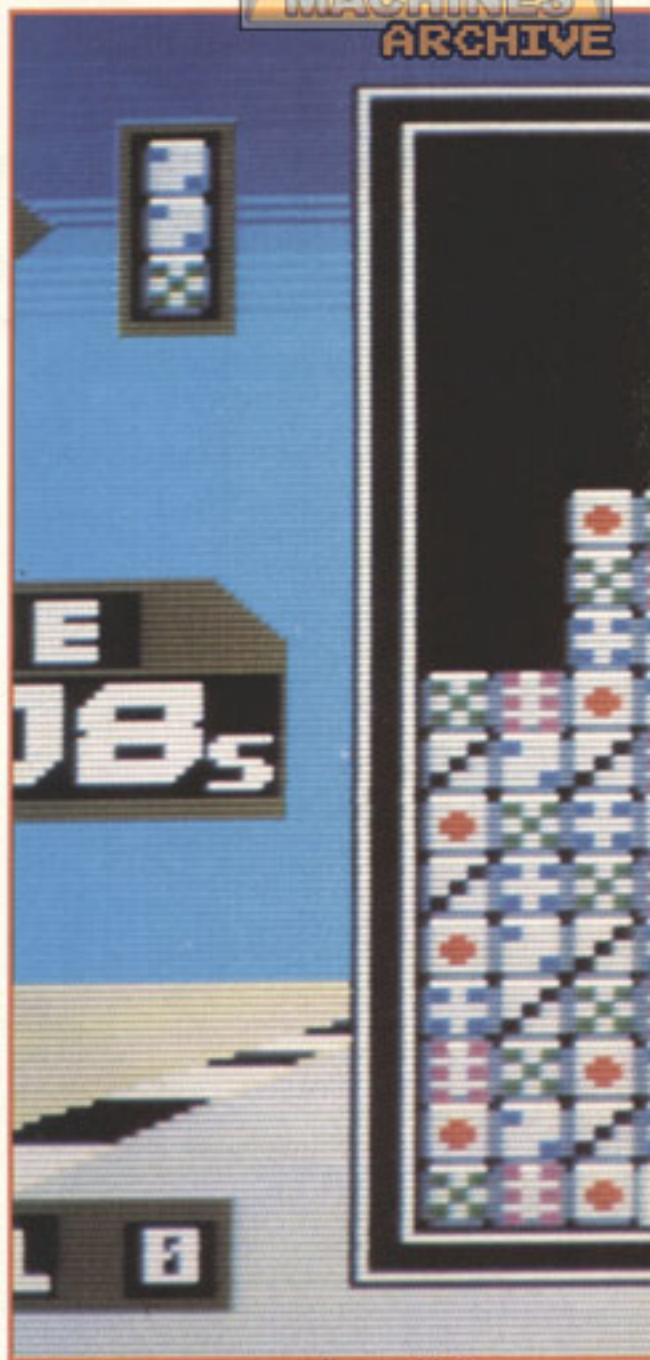
Throughout the game the backgrounds to the screens vary. It can be a view of a road (which scrolls progressively faster as your score increases), or a star field (again, the stars speed up as you advance). Although these effects aren't intrusive, they present an excellent visual treat whilst playing.

COMMENT

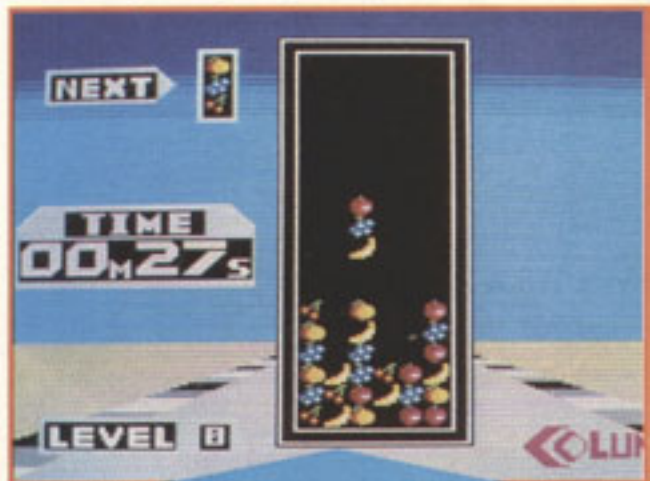


MATT

After playing this game on the Megadrive, I've become a fan: and the Master System version is excellent too. This game manages to be both soothing and completely addictive at the same time! It's easier to get to grips with than Tetris (although not quite as good overall), and offers the sort of challenge that makes me wonder why beat 'em ups are so popular. The music goes a long way to adding atmosphere, and there's nothing as satisfying as watching a carefully-planned chain reaction take place. Make sure Columns has a place in your collection - you'll be surprised how often you play it.



▲ *Things are getting dicey, with the screen*

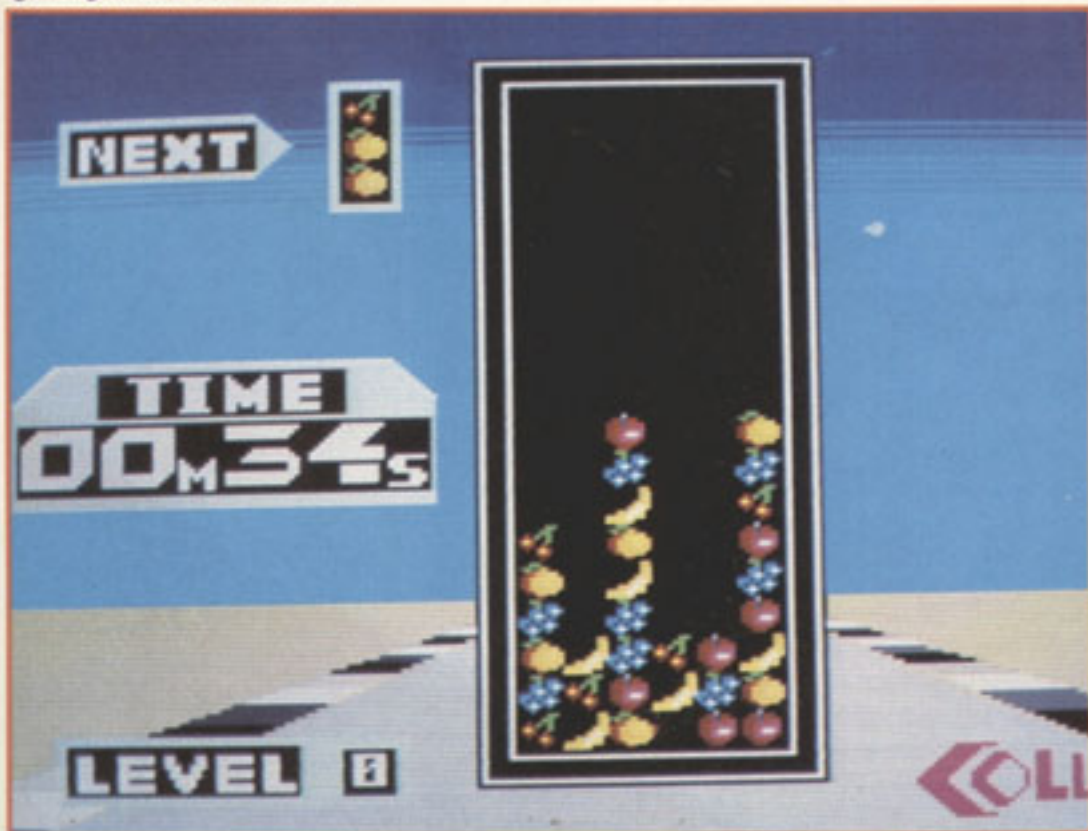


LET'S GET FRUITY

For extra excitement, try changing the blocks into one of the bizarre alternatives. The fruit option changes the jewels into bananas, cherries, apples and the like. To really confuse, select the dice option - it's very difficult to keep track of the dots! Still, if you're bored of the standard jewels these choices add that little bit more to the game. Experiment!



getting a little too crowded.

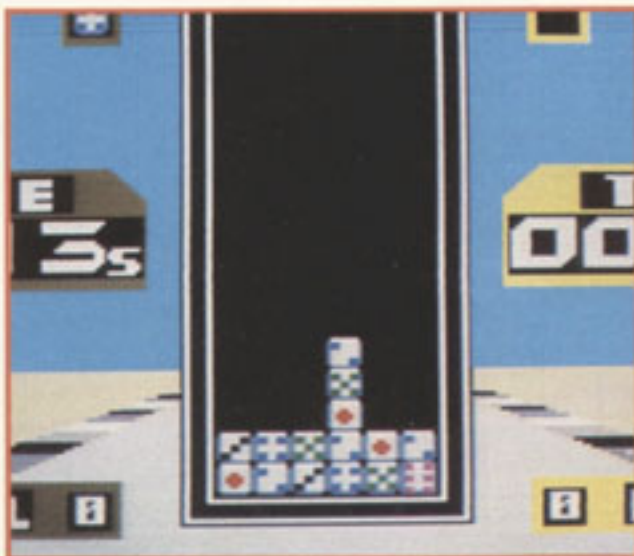


COMMENT



JULIAN

Although Columns sounds rather dull, it's the sort of game that you keep on coming back to time and time again because it's simple, playable and very addictive indeed. It starts off easy, but when you get to high levels the jewels fall at very high speed, and your hand-to-eye co-ordination is given a really good work-out. A special mention must go to the sound, which is one of the best tunes I've heard on the Sega. Columns might not be the most exciting game in the world, but it's a great way to unwind after you've just dispatched some big baddie with your lasers, or have kicked the heads of endless street gangs in the latest beat 'em up! Try it out - you'll be surprised at just how much fun it is!



▲ The dice come tumblin' down, making it tricky to read them.

SEGA

REVIEW



牛詩集



BY: SEGA

PRICE: £29.99

RELEASE DATE: NOV

GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY/MED

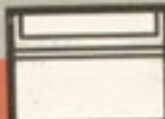
LIVES: 1

CONTINUES: 0

SKILL LEVELS: 9

RESPONSIVENESS: GREAT

1-2
PLAYERS



PRESENTATION 84%

The intro screen is suitably classical, and the backgrounds add a neat graphic touch.

GRAPHICS 78%

Fairly basic, but with this sort of game it's to be expected.

SOUND 89%

Subtle, restrained effects and tunes that fit the game to a tee!

PLAYABILITY 93%

Addictive, therapeutic, absorbing, and very enjoyable.

LASTABILITY 88%

Although it won't grab your attention in the same way as an arcade game, you'll keep coming back to it.

OVERALL 89%

A brilliant Tetris variant with a variety of options and playability coming out of its ears.