



It's the arcade puzzle game second only to Tetris in the best-puzzle-game-ever stakes. It's the game that had thousands of cool, Pepsi-drinking Californians super-glued to coin-op cabinets. It's Klax, the tic-tac-tile game requiring skill, genius and cunning amongst other things.

The aim of Klax is simply to klax. You klax by creating klaxes. As you'll see from the screenshots the game is set on a 3D ramp. Different coloured tiles roll along the ramp, and it's your job to collect these tiles and arrange them in the bin below the ramp. A klax is a just three (or more) tiles of the same colour placed in a straight line. This straight line can be either horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Once a klax has been created, the tiles vanish, enabling you to fill up the bin with even more tiles in pursuit of more klaxes.

The game itself is divided up into 99 waves, and each wave has a different objective. For example, on wave one, you just have to complete three klaxes before moving onto wave two. Later on things get more difficult. For example, you may have to survive a tide of 100 tiles, or clock up 10,000 points to progress. Once you've completed wave 99, the game is won.

You aren't permitted to let any of the tiles fall off the ramp without you collecting them with your paddle. You're only allowed to let three go over before the game ends. Reach a warp wave, though, and your tile-count is cleared.

However, real Klax-perts couldn't care less about completing wave 99. Apparently the real test in Klax is in amassing as high a score as possible...



COMMENT



JULIAN

I played the imported Japanese Megadrive version of Klax last year and came away disappointed - the control method lacked precision and made playing the game unnecessarily difficult and frustrating. Expecting this official UK version to be exactly the same game, I feared the worst, but found myself pleasantly surprised. Domark/Tengen have tweaked it and made the control method far more responsive and accurate. The end result is an addictive arcade puzzle game which tests your reflexes and hand-to-eye co-ordination to their limits. I really enjoyed playing it, and although it mightn't appeal to every Megadrive owner, anyone who's after something other than platform or blasting action should definitely check it out.

NAMCOT KLAX? NO THANKS!

Klax fans will probably know that a Japanese import version is also available courtesy of Namcot. However, this official UK version is a completely reprogrammed game and is in fact about twice as good as the Namcot game. So be careful when you buy!



THE
MEAN
MACHINES
ARCHIVE

KLAX



WARP WAVES AHOY!

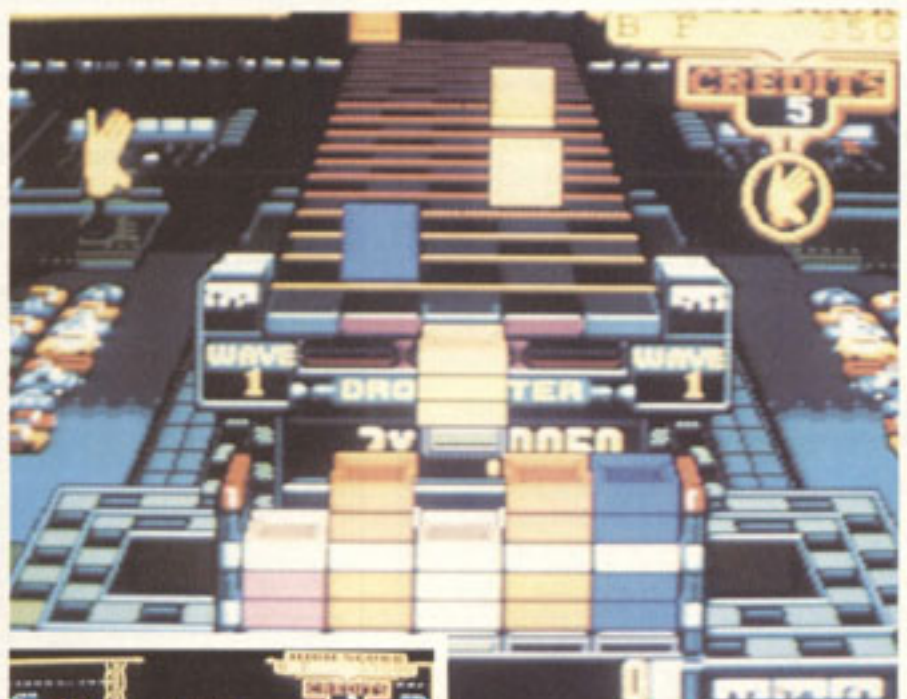
If completing the game is your prime objective, using the Warp Waves is your best bet. There's no secret as to which waves are warp waves because it tells you just before the action begins. However, to successfully warp, you must construct a BIG X (as pictured). The BIG X gives you lots of big points too. Good eh?

▼ 265,000 points are yours with this amazing klax!



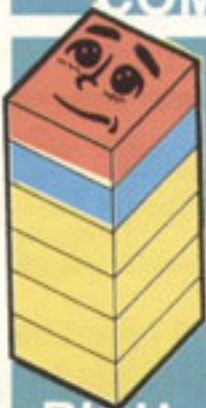
MULTIPLE KLAXES

The score multiplier is the high scorer's best friend in Klax. When tiles disappear after completing a klax, the tiles on top fall down. If these should fall to form a klax, you get double the score. If the tiles above this klax fall into another you get triple the score for the klax. Sounds interesting? Well, put it this way, there's one klax which creates so many multiples you end up with a score of over 265,000! That's a whole lot of points.



▲ A simple horizontal 3-klax here.

COMMENT



Let's get one thing straight. This isn't the same as the Japanese import version of Klax by Namcot. Tengen themselves have stepped in and completely reprogrammed

RICH

the Megadrive version, improving the gameplay and graphics no end. So why aren't raving like hell over this? After all, Klax is my all-time favourite puzzle game. I'm afraid the answer lies in the control method. Sometimes, when you're in a rush, the joyypad just isn't sensitive enough. It can't be down to the hardware - the PC Engine version responds brilliantly. This lack of sensitivity really is a pain, resulting in many frustrating deaths. That said, if you're after a version of Klax for the Megadrive, go for the official English one over the Japanese import. It's far closer to the arcade, but I still get the nagging feeling it could have been better.



BY: Tengen
PRICE: £34.99
 RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER
 GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
 LIVES: 3
 CONTINUES: 3
 SKILL LEVELS: 3
 RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY

1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 78%

Just like the coin-op, complete with a decent attract sequence.

GRAPHICS 78%

Just the same as the coin-op really, with a variety of well-defined backdrops and functional sprites.

SOUND 84%

A lot of the coin-op's sampled "oohs" and "yeahs" are in there.

PLAYABILITY 84%

The fiddly control method is a tad annoying, but the addictive arcade action's still in there.

LASTABILITY 81%

Klax has the sort of action that brings you back many months later for another fix of top-hole puzzle action.

OVERALL 84%

Only the slightly annoying controls stop this from being one of the best versions of Klax yet. Klax fans should buy this instead of Japanese version.