Crystal Aura
Software
Presents
BeamTron
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BeamTron is a classic action game based on the lightcycle racing from the movie Tron. You'll find it completely customizable and better than ever.

The game runs on any Macintosh computer. A Power Macintosh or better is recommended for some of the more processor-intensive modes of play, but it works fine on most older computers too. Likewise, thousands of colors or better are recommended, but it certainly works in 256 and even black and white.

This game is SHAREWARE, try before you buy. Registration information is in the game.

Information:

There are 4 players, each of which controls a "laser" that appears as a beam of light on the screen. These beams move at a constant speed and leave a trail behind them. They explode on collision with barriers such as the trail of any beam, even their own. The beams all begin at different locations in a sort of arena, the grid. The grid can be enclosed, meaning that touching the edges brings death, or it can wrap around, meaning touching an edge teleports a beam to the other side of the grid.

Because the lasers leave a trail behind and must continue to move forward, the amount of space left on the grid decreases as the game continues. Your goal in controlling one of these lasers is to keep as much of that decreasing space to yourself as possible, while trying to force the other beams into colliding. When only one laser is left alive the winner receives points that determine who will eventually win the game and the beams all recharge to continue fighting on a new grid. At the start of each round, each laser and its name, type and/or key set will be displayed at its starting position, then the grid will be generated and the lasers will begin moving across it. At this point the game is going, so do your best to avoid collision.

If you find it too easy or too difficult, you can change the speed to be faster or slower, or you can change any other settings you want to. In fact, there are so many different options that it would be a pain to abort the game, change a setting, then start a new game just to see what each option does. For this reason, you can begin a Practice Round during which options can be changed and the game will adjust so you can instantly see what the options do. If you want to, you can also set all but one laser to Inactive and practice maneuvering as the only laser on the grid.

Controls:

The four players that control the lasers can be either human or computer. A player can also be

inactive, or nonexistent. You can change who controls a laser with the "Players" menu.

If a player is human, that player controls his/her laser with keys on the keyboard. The true fun of a game of Tron is being able to play against other people at a computer. Note that only player one may be a human-controlled player until you register.

What exactly are the keyboard controls? There are 6 different key sets, each covering a part of the keyboard. Player 1's controls default to the arrow keys, up arrow to go up, left arrow to go left, etc.
If, for instance, you want to control Player 1 with w to go up, a to go left, s/x to go down and d to go right, choose the "wasd" option from "Key Set" submenu of Player 1.
If there are too many people to comfortably fit their hands over their keyboard controls, keep in mind that for a more enjoyable experience two keyboards can easily be hooked together.

If a player is computer, it (obviously) doesn't need a keyboard to play, and will automatically control a laser based on that player's personality. There are 9 different computer personalities, from Determined to Happy–Go–Lucky to Insane.

Most options that affect the gameplay or its speed/sound/graphics are found directly in the menus. See "hidden controls" below for the exceptions.
Note: Some of these are disabled when the game is unregistered.

Menus:
File:
Practice: Begins a new game that only lasts one round, during which options can still be changed so you can see their effect during play.
New Game: Begins a new game. During the game, most options are disabled except for graphical and audio control. The game continues until the time/round maximum is reached.
Pause: Pauses the game and any music that it is playing. Activates automatically when switching to another application. If game is paused already, gameplay continues, activates automatically when switching back to the game.
Abort: Immediately cancels whatever game is currently playing.
Quit: Quits and records changes made to settings.
Edit:
Undo: No effect.
Cut: When entering text, standard use.
Copy: When entering text, standard use.
Paste: When entering text, standard use.
Clear: Clears the screen during or out of play, causing it to redraw itself.
General:
Game Speed: Choose a game speed from slowest to fastest. Human players have difficulty reacting to play if game is set too fast, and difficulty enduring it if set too slow.
Game Scoring: Determine when and how players' scores should increase.
Game Length: Choose either a maximum number of rounds or a maximum amount of time for a game to last. A "minute" in game time can take any amount of real time depending on the speed the game is set to and the speed of the computer it is running on.

Sound: Turn game sound effects on or off, or turn music on or off. If you wish to listen to something else than the default "BeamTron Music" choose Music Select. Choosing a non-music movie file is not recommended, nor is using another application to play music instead.

Gameplay:

Laser Movement: Choose between 2, 4 or 8-directional movement. 2-directional allows players to turn 90° left or right with their left or right key. 4-directional allows players to face in any single direction they press, left faces toward the left side of the screen, down faces toward the bottom of the screen, etc. 8-directional allows players to move laterally and diagonally, either by pressing two directions at once or by using a separate diagonal key.

Starting Positions: Choose whether the lasers will begin each round at the corners of the screen, the edges of the screen, or the middle of the screen heading outward. Or, select how starting positions are displayed at the beginning of each round.

Dying Time: Choose how long lasers will survive and continue moving after a collision before they explode, or toggle the Disappear After setting, which makes lasers and their trails disappear after they explode.

Explosions: Set the size or direction of laser/mine explosions.

Grid Wrap: Choose if the sides of the grid will warp lasers to the other side or kill them.

Grid Walls: Choose what extra barriers should always be present.

Grid Mines: Choose how many mines should go off at the start of each round or how frequently they go off during each round.

Graphics:

Draw Grid Flat: The grid is drawn in normal overhead 2D, this is by far the fasted choice.

Draw Grid Angled: Draws the grid angled so that the rows at the top of the screen are inset more than those at the bottom, giving more room for the scores to be displayed.

Draw Grid Curved: The grid is drawn in a curved, somewhat 3D mode. This is slower because the vertical lines are not straight.

Draw Grid Sphere: The grid is drawn pushed in at the corners to make it spherical. The grid takes the longest to draw in this mode because the vertical and horizontal lines are curved.

Draw Vertical Lines: If this is on, vertical grid lines are drawn. If in curved or sphere mode, turning this off speeds up the drawing greatly.

Draw Horizontal Lines: If this is on, horizontal grid lines are drawn. If in sphere mode, turning this off speeds up the drawing greatly.

Blur Grid: When on, the grid takes at least three times longer to draw, but is smoother. Like many things, you can disable it temporarily with the escape key.

Blur Lasers: When on, lasers and walls are smoothed. This, unlike Blur Grid, is recommended and has little effect on speed except on slow computers.

Main Font: Choose text will be displayed in from the fonts available on your system.

Main Color: All non-laser text, barriers and mines are displayed in the color chosen here.

Status Displays: Choose if the score, laser and player status should be displayed during play. If you have a slow computer, consider turning the status displays off to speed up play.

Lasers:

(Choose the name of the laser you wish to change the settings of and move the mouse to the side to for that laser's settings. To apply a change to all four lasers at once, hold down **option**.)

Human: Make controlled by keyboard.

Key Set: If controlled by keyboard, choose which keys control the laser.

Computer: Make controlled automatically by computer.

Behavior: If controlled automatically by computer, choose behavior of computer for the laser.

Inactive: Turns laser off until switched to Human or Computer.

Color: Choose which color of light the laser is displayed in.

Tone: Choose if the laser light is normal intensity, darker, lighter, or automatically changed based on score. Or, choose the speed the laser fluctuates within its chosen color.

Name…: Change the name of the laser or player that controls it.

Hidden Controls:

To change the size of the grid, change the monitor resolution and the grid will automatically adjust. For instance, there will be much more room on a 1600x1200 pixel screen than on a 640x480 screen. If you have a decent choice, I suggest the highest resolution that allows thousands of colors.

Command-Tilde (~`) is a "boss key." It instantly pauses, silences and hides BeamTron.

For your convenience, the game will run in a fast "bare bones" mode whenever the **escape** key is held down. Try it if anything is taking too long, but you shouldn't have to use it too often.

To reset all preferences except the status of your registration, hold down the **delete** key when the game as starting up. If it doesn't work, try again but press it earlier.

To enable a few strange options when registered, hold down the **d** key when it starts up.

Command-G switches between the grid being fully wrap-around and not wrapping.

Command-R is a second way to run a practice round.

Command-Period (.) is a second way to pause the game.

Command-Backslash (\) is useless, but it will try to reverse any music that's playing.

You can use the "Set Names…" option in the Players menu to pick names for the players. There are certain names that, when given to a player, activate unique effects. If successful, the game will make a tone, and you can change the name back to something else you prefer, or a different name to combine the two effects. Color effects don't combine, just change a laser's color to cancel them. To undo a non-color effect, set a laser to Inactive and back again. Here they are:

"**Aqua**"- sets the laser's color to random blue stripes.

"**Beamer**"- the laser teleports to a random location when would collide.

"**BlueHot**"- sets the laser's color to blue with random red stripes.

"**Bomber**"- makes the laser trail a dangerous chain of explosions.

"**Brimstone**"- sets the laser's color to random red stripes.

"Bronco"- makes the (human) laser restless and difficult to control.
"Confetti"- sets the laser's color to random stripes.
"Cyborg"- makes the laser human and computer at the same time.
"Daisy"- makes the laser trail a dangerous chain of miniature explosions.
"Forge"- sets the laser's color to red with random blue stripes.
"Grass"- sets the laser's color to random green stripes.
"Hoplite"- makes the laser immune to all laser trails, but not walls.
"Incognito"- sets the laser's color to black, making it invisible.
"Lightspeeder"- makes the laser go at double speed.
"Merlin"- makes the laser project a solid mirror image of itself.
"Narciss"- makes the laser immune to its own trail.
"Slider"- makes the (human) laser automatically turn when it would crash.
"Spectral"- sets the laser's color to randomly rainbowish (yellow-cyan)-(red-blue).
"Toxic"- sets the laser's color to green with random red stripes.

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