

Greebles

Version 1.0 © 1997 Peter N Lewis and Stairways Shareware

Greebles is an action packed game of skill involving Bulldozers, Cockroaches and Fish. With one hundred unique levels to explore, it will keep a single player busy, and when you add multi-player play (up to four people on a single computer, and up to nine computers playing over a network) the possibilities expand enormously.

Features

- One hundred unique levels to explore with unlimited progression.
- Three different skill levels: Easy, Normal, and Suicidal.
- Up to four players with a single computer.
- Up to nine computers.
- Up to 36 players in total!
- Friendly computer players (for when your friends can't visit)
- Nasty computer players (for that added challenge)
- Rich graphics, neat sound effects, great music.
- Custom game options (like infinite lives, so you don't have to hack)
- Multipack discounts: as low as \$8/copy for five or more copies.

Requirements

Greebles requires System 7.0 or later, a 68040 or PowerPC, 256 colours, 640 by 480 screen, 3Meg of RAM. Networking requires Open Transport 1.1 and a TCP/IP network (modem not recommended).

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How to Get Started

The easiest way to learn Greebles is to play the game, but there are some things you can do to make your life easier when you are a beginner.

You may wish to try observing the Demo game for a while, which will give you some idea of how the game is played. Just click the Demo button, sit back and relax.

Or, if this is all too passive and you want to get Squishing:

- Start by running the game and clicking on the Setup button
- At the bottom of the Setup window is a pop-up menu which lets you choose the Difficulty of the game. Select Easy from the Pop-Up menu
- Edit the controls corresponding to the player location you want to start in (i.e. if you want to start in the top left, edit the controls shown in the top left), and edit that Player's name by clicking in the text box.
- Make sure the check box is enabled so that that your character will be included in the game
- You can change which keys the Players uses by clicking on one of the arrows or the push key (in the middle of the arrows). When a button is highlighted you can choose which key to use by tapping it on the keyboard
- You may wish to check that no other Players are playing (that is, their checkboxes are not enabled)
- Click Save to exit the Setup window
- Click Play

Note that you can have up to four players playing on the same machine, even without networking, although it can get pretty crowded around the keyboard!

The Full Explanation

In Greebles you navigate your Player around a maze of blocks. You progress through the levels by killing all the Greebles and Greeble Generators on the level. You score points by killing Greebles, getting Bonus specials, killing other Players and surviving the death of other Players (more on this later). Players have a finite number of lives and they can die by touching a Greeble, being squished by a block or standing next to a Grenade as it goes off.

Setting Controls

Greebles' controls are straightforward. There are five keys per Player: four direction keys and one Push key. The direction keys indicate an absolute direction, meaning that the Up key always directs your character up the screen, no matter what direction it is currently facing.

Direction and push keys can be set in the Setup screen. The Setup screen is available from both the Title Screen and during the game. To set direction keys for a Player, click on the arrow which points in the

direction you wish to set, then press the key.

Make sure the Player whose Direction keys you are configuring will be included in game by clicking on its checkbox. Up to four people can play on each machine-- each appears in a different corner.

The arrangement of the Players on the Setup screen is the same as the arrangement of the Players when they first appear during a game. You can rearrange where a particular Player will appear by dragging the Players around in the Setup screen. Click on the Player's icon and drag to where you wish the Player to appear.

Although Players cannot move diagonally, you can hold two keys down and your Player will move in the indicated directions where possible.

Certain keys are reserved. The number keys along the top of the keyboard act as volume control. The number 0 turns sound off, while the number 9 is maximum volume. The Function Keys and Numeric Keypad are still available to be used as a Player keys.

The Escape key is also reserved. If the Escape key is pressed during the game you go to the Pause screen, from which the Instructions and Setup screens are available, and you also have the option to Hide, Kill or Resume the game.

The key combination Command-Q always quits the game.

About Blocks

Blocks are your friends. To attain true mastery of Greebles you must become one with the block and learn how to use the block as both offence and defence. There are a variety of different kinds of blocks, but they can be broadly classified as Normal and Special blocks. Specials can affect the way normal way blocks behave, change the way the character behaves or some other Special effect!

Most blocks in Greebles can be pushed or crushed. A block which can be pushed must have clear space on the far side of the block. To push the block, the Player simply walks up to the block, faces toward the block and presses the push key.

If there is clear space and the block is not of an unmovable Special, the block will move away from the Player at high speed. Blocks in motion tend to stay in motion. Blocks will happily slide along at high speed until they squish a Player or Greeble or bounce off something.

Typically a block will bounce twice before grinding to a halt. The block will slow on each successive bounce (unless you are in Suicidal mode, where the block may maintain its speed).

If there is nowhere for the block to go when it is pushed the block will be crushed (unless it is of a kind of block which cannot be crushed). Crushing blocks is a useful way to navigate the maze, allowing the Player to shortcut through sections of the maze. Players must generally crush ('eat') blocks which contain Specials to extract the Special.

Since Blocks bounce when they hit something solid, it is possible for Players to squish themselves with a brick they have pushed. Players moving at normal speed can dodge any Block they push so long as there is more than a single block of space behind the Block.

Note: In easy mode, Players are not squished by Blocks.

Players with the Speed Special can dodge any Block they can push (so long as the brick doesn't hit a Bounce Special Block).

Blocks gradually dissolve over the course of the level. The level ends when no blocks remain. One block is always dissolving on the screen. In Suicidal mode the blocks transmute into Grenades, then explode, randomly pushing blocks all over the screen.

Squishing Greebles

The most common way to gain points is to Squish Greebles. Squishing a Greeble is a simple matter of lining a block up and pushing it into the Greeble. The Greeble will be gathered up by the block as the block slides majestically toward some hard place, and then killed with a satisfying squish.

Unfortunately, Players will also normally die if they happen to get caught in front off a moving block. Once a Player or Greeble is caught by a moving block they will not be released unless the block dissolves before the Player or Greeble is squished. (It is possible to move rapidly across the screen by crushing a block, bouncing it and catching a ride, but not easy or safe!) Note: In Easy mode Players are not affected by blocks: they are not moved and they are not crushed.

If you crush multiple Greebles with a single block, the second Greeble's value is multiplied by two. The third Greeble's value is multiplied by four, the fourth Greeble's value is multiplied by eight and the fifth Greeble's value is a whopping sixteen times its original value! So crushing five Greebles simultaneously is worth $16+8+4+2+1 = 31$ times as much as crushing a single Greeble. This is as high as it goes: the seventh Greeble is also worth sixteen times its original value. So the multipliers for the different number of Greebles squished in a single go are:

Number	Multiplier	Total
1	1	1
2	2	3
3	4	7
4	8	15
5	16	31
6	16	47
7	16	63

etc...

This is not the only factor which affects how many points you gain from crushing one or more Greebles. In the lower right hand corner of the Game screen is a percentage value which gradually counts from 100% down to 0%. This indicates how much of its original value a Greeble is currently worth. The counter stops at 0%, at which time all Greebles are worth no points.

Finally, if you die before the level ends you lose all points gained on that level. Points are only kept for Player lives which survive to the end of the level (which, on multiplayer games, may not mean you have to successfully complete the level).

Specials

Players are often outnumbered and Specials can help balance the odds. But there are a variety of Specials and they do not all help the Players. They can be broadly classified as:

Player Specials Special Blocks Miscellaneous

Players Specials

Player Specials affect the way the Player behaves or gives them special abilities. Player Specials last for ten seconds. Getting a second Special of a type a Player already has resets the duration of that special to 10 seconds, but does not increase its effectiveness.

When a Player gains a Special the name of the Special shows up in the top left hand corner of the screen. The Special's Icon also shows up beneath the Player's score. The Player changes colour while it holds a Special and it flashes three times as the Special expires.

Specials can dramatically change how a Player behaves, so it is important to keep track of who has what!

- **Bonus** - gives you points, good for a high score but not much else (and you'll lose your score if you die on the level, so don't worry about these guys too much).
- **Shield** - gives you Super Strength, blocks bounce off you and Greebles can't hurt you. Useful for sculpting the maze.
- **Speed** - gives you Super Speed, letting you outrun (most) Greebles and blocks. Use this to race around killing Greebles and grabbing Specials. But after a short time you'll feel like molasses!
- **Freeze** - If everyone else is moving too fast for you, grab one of these. For ten seconds you get to kill all the Greebles: they are frozen where they stand. Grabbing another one before this one runs out is a good idea, too! Other Players are slowed, but not stopped by this special.
- **Fireball** - Now is the time to get even! Throw exploding fireballs in all directions. Be careful or you'll kill yourself faster than you can say *Die Scum!*.
- **Death Touch** - Our turn to do some wiping out! Whoosh with our heat ray! And them running and dying, beaten at their own game. This one is fun! Kill 'em all, kill 'em fast! Players will die if they come in contact with someone with a Death Touch unless they have Shields or Death Touch.

Special Blocks

Special Blocks behave differently from normal blocks.

- **Unbreakable** - Don't bother trying to crush these guys-- your puny strength is no match for their reinforced structure. At least you can throw them around.
- **Unmovable** - These are nailed down. Don't bother trying to push them. And if you figure you can just crush them - think again! They are here to stay. Only natural decay can remove them.
- **Line-Up** - Those cute little Stairways icons can come in mighty handy; if you can get enough of them together in one place they'll break open and give you some goodies. Lines of three or more give you points, and they transmute into Specials. Don't crush them- you'll slow down like you were Frozen.
- **Grenade** - These guys don't bounce like regular blocks, but they do explode. Great for trick shots like *round the corner* and *through the block*.
- **Bounce Grenade** - Like grenades, but harder to use. They are a bit tougher and bounce a few times before exploding. Still, with some careful timing (or lots of luck)É

- **Bounce** - Painful, that's what they are. Bricks that bounce off these guys don't slow down at all. And if there is one on each side, well, can you say *killing zone*? Be careful!

Miscellaneous

- **Greeble Generator** - These periodically produce a new Greebles. Usually you can just crush them, but later on you have to surround them with blocks (tricky!). Watch and listen for the warnings!
- **Timed Release** - This one turns into a random special. Just hope it doesn't turn into a Greeble Generator! Keep an eye on these and hope for the best.
- **Skip Levels** - If it's all too easy, crush one of these and you'll skip forward five levels (assuming you manage to finish the one you're on, of course!).
- **Extra Life** - Collect these! You'll need lives to get past some of those tricky later levels. Unless you're really good-- then you can spurn them and try to get through without losing a life.

A Special Note on Greeble Generators

Greeble Generators are so important they deserve their own special section. Greeble Generators create Greebles, so it is important to kill them off quickly, otherwise the screen can be swamped with (ever decreasing in value) Greebles! In the early stages when Greeble Generators first appear they can be crushed like any other block, but at later stages they become uncrushable and they must be destroyed by surrounding them: these are Hard Generators.

Greeble Generators are always immovable.

Soft Generators show as black, and flash red three times before emitting a Greeble. Hard Generators are red and flash black three times before emitting a Greeble.

To surround a Greeble Generator put blocks (of any type) against all four faces of the Generator. When it next tries to emit a Greeble, it will (instead) explode. When it explodes it will push against the bricks surrounding it (like a Grenade), so be careful.

Surrounding Greeble Generators can be very tricky, but if there are enough blocks around you can always do it. The blocks fade away over the course of the level - another reason to eliminate the Generators early.

Play Modes

Greebles has three different Play modes: Easy, Normal and Suicidal.

- **Easy:** In easy mode the Player cannot be crushed by Blocks, but they can be killed by touching a Greeble.
- **Normal:** Players can be crushed by Blocks or touching Greebles. Blocks dissolve quietly and only bounce twice-- unless they bounce against a moving Player, a moving block or a Bounce Block.
- **Suicidal:** In suicidal mode as a block dissolves it turns into a Grenade, then detonates. When a block bounces there is a 50% chance that it will not slow down (as if it had hit a bounce block).

Know Thine Enemy: Greebles

Despite occasional bursts of apparently intelligent (and malicious!) behaviour the Greebles in Greebles are... dumb. But that doesn't mean they aren't dangerous! Greebles come in a variety of flavours, but they have the following characteristics:

- There are only ever one or two types of Greebles on the screen at a time
- Greebles only move at one of two speeds
- Greebles have standard turning characteristics

Greebles of given type should all have the same turning characteristics, although they may vary in how fast they move depending on what level they are on. Greebles can 'burst' into faster movement. Once again this burst behaviour is dependent on the level.

Know Thine Enemy: Als

The Artificial Intelligence Players can be far nastier opponents than the Greebles. Als come in two flavours: Friendly and Nasty.

Both Als move randomly through the maze. They look for opportunities to squish, and can do so extremely quickly. Als know how to use some specials, but they don't know how to surround Hard Greeble Generators.

Friendly Als will not try to squish a Greeble if another Player (Human or AI) is in the path. Nasty Als will actively treat all other Players as valid targets and try to squish them if possible.

Watch out for Als shooting through walls with Grenades. They know a couple of neat tricks... and they won't hesitate to use them.

Know Thine Enemy: You and Other Players

Accidental suicide is a common problem in Greebles, although this problem is significantly reduced by playing in Easy mode. Killing a Player is worth 1000 points. But if a Player kills itself, their death is worth 2000 points to all the other Players still currently alive on that level.

The game engine does not enforce cooperative or uncooperative behaviour, so Players will have to come to some agreement: Are you going for levels, or is this just a squishfest? Are Human Players your most Dangerous Enemies, or...

Level Progression

There are a total of 100 levels. The game wraps when you finish the 100th level back to the 51st level, so the 100th level is repeated at levels 150, 200, 250, etc... It will continue to loop for as long as you wish to play.

Using the Play Custom Game button, you can access any level between Level 1 and Level 70. Level 70 and onwards can only be reached by completing previous levels.

Network Play

Greebles has excellent Network gaming support, and Network games are lots of fun. Greebles uses a Server/Client model, which means that one machine acts as the Server which the other computers connect to. When you start a Network Game you have the option of advertising your game on the Web at the Greebles Web Tracker.

Up to four players can play on each machine, and up to eight machines can connect to a server, so up to 36 players can play in a single game!

Greebles does not play adequately over 33.6kbps Modem. Higher speed and/or lower latency connections will improve performance, and 56kbps Modems may be adequate.

Greebles uses TCP/IP networking to communicate between the Server and the Client. Clients should connect to the Server's DNS name or IP number. This is displayed on the Server's Network Play screen, which shows after the network game has been configured.

Clients can Join and Leave games at will, but new Players will not become active till the start of the next level. Players can change their keyboard setup, whether the Player is Human or AI and starting positions during the game by hitting the Escape Key. This suspends the game on all machines. Anyone can Resume the Game from this Pause Screen. Instructions are also available from the Pause Screen.

Changes made in the Setup window are not available until the level restarts or the level progresses.

If the Server Kills the game, the game ends.

Server Options

The Difficulty Level the Server has configured on its Setup screen is effective for the whole Network.

The Servers have several options when they start the Game. They are:

- **Unlimited Lives:** Players have unlimited lives. Free Life tokens are replaced with extra (benevolent) specials.
- **Start game at level:** Network Play can commence at any level between 1 and 70. The game progresses as it does in single Player mode.
- **Game time limit:** A checkbox enables and disables this setting, which is a time (in minutes) that the game will run for before dropping into the Pause screen. If the game is Resumed at this point the timer is reset and the game will drop into the Pause screen again after the predetermined time. A Game time limit is a useful reminder to take a break and when you are playing Round Robin Competitions.
- **Level ends when:** A checkbox enables and disables this setting, which lets the server set how many human Players must be alive for the level to continue. This is useful when playing with (for instance) four or five Players, because it allows the level to restart when only one or two Players remain alive (that way not too many people are left waiting for the level to end).

A Good Network Game

Network play is heaps of fun. To help you have a better Network game, try the following:

- Find the fastest, best connected machine and designate it the server. Don't try and serve multiple machines over a 33.6kbps modem, it doesn't have the bandwidth
- On the Server don't forget to click on Setup, choose the Level Difficulty (Normal is good) and click Save
- Choose Host Network Game... on the Server

- Enable 'Unlimited lives'
- Enable 'Levels ends when 1 Players remain', or 2 Players if there are four or more Players playing
- Click Start
- Loudly announce the name of the Server. The name shows up at the bottom of the Network Setup screen between the Cancel and Play buttons
- Clients now click Join Network Game... and enter the name or IP number of the Server
- Clients can observe where the other Players are located on the Network Setup screen and move by clicking on the Cancel button, going into Setup and dragging their Player to a different corner. It is desirable to make sure that Players are evenly distributed between the corners and Players who share a corner have similar skill levels. Good Players will tend to squish inexperienced Players
- The Server waits until everyone is happy and clicks Play
- In the first couple of levels everyone should work out what keys are comfortable. Players can change their keys by hitting the Escape key and then clicking on the Setup button.

The Greeble Tracker

To help organise Network Games we have set up a Greeble Tracker on the Web. When you configure the Server you have the option of advertising your game on the net. At the start of the Network game the Server sends information about the game to Greeble Tracker which can then advertise the game on the web, if you have asked for the game to be advertised.

The Greeble Tracker can be found at: <http://www.stairways.com/cgi-bin/greebles.cgi>

The Tracker advertises the Game Name, how many Human and AI players there are, how many machines are currently involved in the game and the current level.

The key to each Network game is the Game Name. By entering a server's name or IP address, an E-Mail address or a code name you can organise a public, semi-private or private game.

By entering the server's name or IP address you are issuing a general invitation-- since everyone knows what the Server is anyone can join!

By entering an E-Mail address other people have to mail you to find out what the game server is, unless they recognize the address and know what server you are probably running. This lets you organise semi-private games.

Use a code name when you have pre-arranged a server: then people will know the game is on when code name shows up.

The Greebles Server sends an update at the end of every level. Games drop off the Tracker's list of current games if the Tracker has not received an update in the last ten minutes.

Registering Greebles

If you enjoy Greebles, please Register the game. We have worked hard to make an enjoyable game and make it available for around the price of a movie. Greebles is Shareware, so we encourage you to play the game and decide whether you like it, but it is also Commercial software and we expect you to pay for the software.

Greebles costs US\$15 for a single user license. Multiple Registrations are heavily discounted:

Number of Registrations	Unit Price (\$US)	Total Cost (\$US)
1	15	15
2	12	24
3	10	30
4	9	36
5	8	40
6	8	48
7+	8	

Multipack registrations provide you with multiple unique serial numbers. (So a six pack of Registrations gives you six unique serial numbers.)

Registration Gets You...

Registered versions of Greebles do not have the periodic Nag screens which pop up during play. The frequency of Nag screens appearing during Network Play is directly proportional to the number of Registered machines connected to the game.

When you have Registered you will also receive instructions on how to download files and manuals which let you create your own Greebles levels. We also provide you with access to the Greebles mailing list, where you can converse with other Greebles enthusiasts, share maps and organise tournaments. We also detail how to subscribe to our announcement and beta testing mailing lists, which will keep you up to date on all the software that Stairways is sending out.

How To Register

You can pay in one of two ways: on-line registration using a web browser, or off-line registration using the Register program. As soon as Kagi Shareware has processed your registration they will send you an 18 digit registration code. This registration code must be entered into Greebles. Note that this code is keyed to your name, so make sure you enter the same name into Greebles that you used to Register. (The name will be included in the Registration Acknowledgement from Kagi.)

To enter the Registration code, open Greebles and click on the Register button. This will open the Register window, where you can enter your name and the Registration number. Thanks for Registering!

On-Line Registration

Our online registration can be found at:

<http://order.kagi.com/cgi-bin/register1.cgi?PL>

Off-Line Registration

Or, using the Register program, you need to:

1. Get hold of a copy of the Register program: Register comes with the Greebles distribution. You can also get Register from the following sites:

<ftp://ftp.stairways.com/stairways/> <ftp://mirrors.aol.com/pub/peterlewis/> <ftp://ftp.amug.org/pub/peterlewis/>

..or there are download links on the following Web page:

<http://www.stairways.com/register/topay.html>

2. Run the Register program and fill out the form: You need to enter your name, email, postal address, and the shareware you wish to pay for. The form accepts many different payment methods such as: US Check, Money Order, Cash (in many different currencies), Visa, Mastercard, American Express, First Virtual, and Invoice (to be given to your accounts payable department).
3. Send it to Kagi Shareware: Then either email the data generated by the registration program or print it and send it via postal mail or fax. Credit card information is encoded by the Register program.

The address to send the completed form to is output by Register when you Print or Copy the completed form. The addresses are:

Email: shareware@kagi.com

FAX: +1 510 652 6589

Snail-mail: Kagi Shareware 1442-A Walnut Street #392-PL Berkeley, California, 94709-1405 USA

4. Enter the Registration Code: When you receive a reply from Kagi Shareware, enter the Registration code into Greebles. This process is described above.

You may distribute this program any way other than on physical media as long as you don't charge for it (reasonable download costs are OK). You must distribute the package in its entirety. We don't guarantee any support, but we always answer our Email. If we don't answer Email it is because your message didn't get to us, or our reply bounced, so please try again and include a valid Internet address if you can.

You MAY NOT DISTRIBUTE this program on any disk or CD without our explicit permission. (Please E-Mail us.)

Warranty

This program should do what is described in this document. If it doesn't, you can simply stop using it. If you paid for the product, and within a year find that it doesn't do what has been described here, then you can notify Stairways Shareware and your money will be refunded and your license cancelled.

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