

THIS MANUAL!
SUCKS!



THIS PLANET SUCKS

" Stupid colonists! They see an ad for a 'good fixer-upper planet opportunity with unlimited mining potential' and do they read the small print? Heck, no! In this case the small print reads '...highly active volcanic outer crust with a massively unstable core.'

This is where we come in, risking our necks to pull these poor saps from their ill-advised purchase before they depreciate with it!

If that wasn't bad enough, this dense asteroid field could be hiding...well...anything!! "

OBJECT OF THE GAME:

Pilot your lander craft down onto the platforms and a colonist will run to you and get onboard. Take off and bring him back to the mothership safely. You can only carry one colonist at a time, so you need to make a complete round trip for each one. You start out with four lander vehicles. Continue saving colonists until you crash your last lander, at which time it's 'Game Over'. If you fail to save at least one of the three colonists during one round (e.g. they all die during your rescue efforts), it's also 'Game Over', regardless of how many landers you have in reserve. Consider your pilot's license revoked!

CONTROLS:

Start a new game by pressing the Reset Button. Launch the lander from the mothership by pressing the Fire Button of your joystick. At that point, gravity takes over and the ship will free fall. Press the Fire Button to use your rockets and move upwards. Move the joystick left and right to control your lander horizontally.

You can move diagonally upward by pressing the Fire Button and either left or right on the joystick at the same time. The effect of gravity will cause your ship to slow down and coast upward for a brief time after you release the Fire Button. It will take some practice for you to master control of the lander craft.



GAME PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS

THE SCREEN:



- A 4 digit score
- B 2 digit fuel gauge
- C Mothership
- D Transition zone from low orbit to the outer atmosphere
- E YOU
- F The outer atmosphere, populated by asteroids and enemy space craft
- G The inner atmosphere (or landing zone) consisting of three platforms, each with a colonist
- H Status line, showing the ships remaining in the game, and the number of colonists rescued so far

SCORING:

You receive points for each colonist you take on board. The colonist on the center (large) platform is worth 5 points. The left (medium) platform is worth 15 points. The right (small) platform is worth 50 points. At the end of each round, which lasts until all three colonists are either rescued or killed, you *may* receive several types of bonus points. A 250 point perfect round bonus is awarded for returning all three colonists safely to the mother ship. You receive one point for each unit of fuel you have remaining at the end of the round. You also receive a bonus for each colonist safely returned to the mothership. This final bonus varies depending on the round you have just played:

round 1: 10 points round 2: 20 points round 3: 30 points
round 4: 40 points round 5: 50 points round 6 and above: 60 points

In addition to the 250 points for a perfect round, the above bonus scores are all tripled when you save all three colonists in a round.

THIS PLANET SUCKS

PLAYING TIPS:

1. Don't touch any other flying objects. As the game progresses, asteroids and enemy space craft move more quickly. Also watch out for missiles fired by the enemy. Missiles move laterally as they fall to the planet surface, but they disintegrate when reaching the inner atmosphere. Your lander as well as the colonists are safe from missiles when in the landing zone.

Hint: The enemy craft combine to shoot only one missile at a time. So if you are clear of a missile, but it is still visible, you can safely navigate beneath enemy ships which is highly risky when no missiles are currently visible.

2. Keep an eye on your fuel gauge. When it hits zero you lose a ship (and any colonist unlucky enough to be onboard at that time). Fuel is consumed by either upward or sideways motion. Moving upward consumes a bit more fuel and moving sideways, and moving diagonally upward consumes fuel fastest of all.

Hint: Obviously the less fuel you use, the higher your score. Learn to land and return as fuel efficiently as possible in order improve your scores.

3. Don't land at full speed. You'll crash and die. Slow down before making contact with the landing platform. This just takes practice.

Hint: You only crash when going maximum speed. Practice free falling from various heights to get a feel for just how high you can be and safely drop to a platform.

4. Don't touch the colonists while your craft is in the air, or they will die. There is no telling which direction a colonist might run to next, so you'll have to just try for the best position you can and hope he doesn't run for your ship before you actually land! Ignore dead colonists, as their twitching bodies are of no use to you.

Hint: If you are running low on fuel, but have rescued at least one colonist, consider *quickly* killing the last man and returning to the mothership to complete the round and avoid the risk of losing the ship to an out of fuel condition.

5. Don't try and land of the surface of the planet. It's molten and your ship will explode. The three platforms are the only safe landing areas, but you have to land directly on top of them. Touching them on the sides will crash your ship. You CAN safely land on a platform with only one of the lander's feet touching.

Hint: The lander craft controls are pretty easy to adjust within one 'pixel'. Learn what a safe landing is by experimentally tapping the lander left and right and landing just on the edge of a platform. This is a useful skill in avoiding accidental colonist squashing.

6. To dock with the mothership, fly up and try to get as close to the center of the opening as you can. Once you leave the outer atmosphere, if you are within the proper docking range, your lander will be pulled aboard automatically. If you've misjudged the docking, you'll crash!

Hint: One of the enemy space ships will never shoot at you. Figuring out which one will help simplify the docking process for you.

This Planet Sucks © 1997 Greg Troutman

Game developed by Greg Troutman

Cartridge and Manual published by AtariAge (www.AtariAge.com)

Label and Manual design by Dave Exton (www.Liveinabin.com)