

CHUNKOUT 2600

ATARI GAME PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS



Complete Game
Play Instructions

4 Game Variations

One Player
Game



Lord Gyrak and the Xotec Armada

NOTE: Always turn the console power switch off when inserting or removing an ATARI Game Program cartridge. This will protect the electronic components and prolong the life of your ATARI Video Computer System game.

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1. The Story So Far

Commander Starblaze, please take a seat. We'll get right to business.

It is the year 2599, and our galaxy trembles before the might of the Warlord Gyarak with his fearsome Xotec armada. As you know, they struck without warning from the legendary Black Galaxy, and world after world has fallen in flames to the hordes of the Xotec. Our people, the enlightened Zari, citizens of the peaceful planet Zarilon fight desperately for survival. For a time, all seemed lost, but just when it appeared that our defeat was imminent, a glimmer of hope has appeared on the horizon.



View of the Xotec Prime Pulsar Fields

Space astronomers on the distant outpost moon of Eria Solus, equipped with the latest Atari Space Computer Telescopes, discovered a distant world, well beyond the advancing Xotec armada. All of the vast scientific resources of Zarilon were quickly mobilized to investigate this new discovery, and the analysis is conclusive:

At last, Commander, we have found the fabled home planet of the Xotec. As you know, our fleet has been decimated, and we do not have a battlegroup, or even a squadron of warships to send. That's why you're here Commander. You see, we've got a mission for you, and it will not be an easy one. Analysis of the Xotec homeworld indicates that it is completely protected by dangerous Pulsar Fields. That is why they have confidently advanced their main fleet and left the Xotec Homeworld unguarded. Sending a battlegroup to attack it would be useless, due to the strength of the fields, but we've got something else in mind. Military power is not the answer here.

You will be given command of the CX-40 Voidstar, and ... yes, you may well look surprised, Commander. It is a converted mining ship, not a Star Cruiser.

Settle down, we have a very good reason for this.

Scientists on Eria Solus have determined that the Pulsar fields surrounding the Xotec homeworld are composed of highly volatile particles at the subatomic level. Using the Voidstar's brand new, top secret Z2PA Advanced Calculation Computer, your mission will be to combine these particles, building up large instabilities in the Quasar fields until the fields collapse. Eventually, you will burrow deep into the heart of the Xotec defenses, and then Commander, we will have our victory.

Only the Z2PA Advanced Calculation Computer can do it, using the latest in Atarian computer magnification software. It will take a deft hand at the controls, which is why we picked you. The precision mining lasers aboard the the Voidstar are the only way, and they require a Class 1 skill level to handle for this operation, which is why you're here.

You are the last hope of the Zarian people, Commander. We'll hold off the Armada as long as we can. We can't beat the Xotec with our guns, so we will use our minds. Pray yours is quick enough. If it's not, then ashes will be all that is left of our beautiful home Zarilon. Say your good-byes, Commander, you leave in an hour.

2. Game Play

In *Chunkout*, you take on the dangerous role of Commander Brock Starblaze as he attacks the defenses of the legendary Xotec homeworld. Using your precision Atari Joystick, you will help him guide the CX-40 Voidstar's Photon Laser Device to take apart the Xotec Pulsar fields particle by particle.



Closeup scan of a Xotec Pulsar Field

It won't be easy. The Pulsar fields get harder the farther in you go. Your Z2PA Advanced Calculation Computer will show you a view of the Pulsar field at the atomic level. Each block is a single particle in the overall field. Particles come in several colors, and these tend to be grouped into larger groups of the same color, due to the subatomic structure of the Xotec fields. The Scientific types are calling them

'Microconglomerate Quantum Phase Packets', but our R&D boys just call them 'chunks'.

Each chunk of the Pulsar Field can be burned away with a nanosecond pulse of the Voidstar's Photon Laser. One pulse destroys all connecting particles of the same color. As you burn away chunks of the field, the other particles will rearrange themselves. Particles of similar color will form larger chunks, and that is the key to success. Skillful use of the Photon Laser will allow you to combine, and then eliminate all of the particles in the current Pulsar Field, and then it's further down into the Xotec defenses as you systematically burrow through the Pulsar Fields. Reach the homeworld, and the war is over.

The further in you go, the tougher things get. The inner defenses of the Xotec homeworld are very tricky. Scans show that the particle distribution becomes very difficult, and the chunks get continually smaller, forcing you to use all of your abilities to combine them in to big enough chunks. No one ever said this would be a cake walk.

3. Using the Controllers

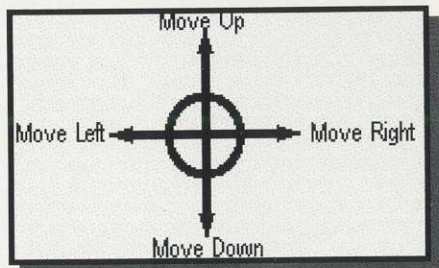


The CX-40 Voidstar comes equipped with a state of the art control mechanism for the Photon Laser: The Joystick. It's elegant in it's simplicity. Moving up, down, left or right will move the Z2PA's laser target designator

in that direction, allowing you to target any section of the current Pulsar Field you desire. Moving the joystick diagonally will move the designator in the direction pressed.

To fire the CX-40 Voidstars powerful-yet-

precise Photon Laser, press the red Fire Button in the upper left of the Joystick Controller. Careful! There's no going back once you do.



4. Game Variations

On your Atari console, you will see two switches labeled 'Difficulty A' and 'Difficulty B'. Make note of them, as you'll be using them when you get to Xotec Prime.

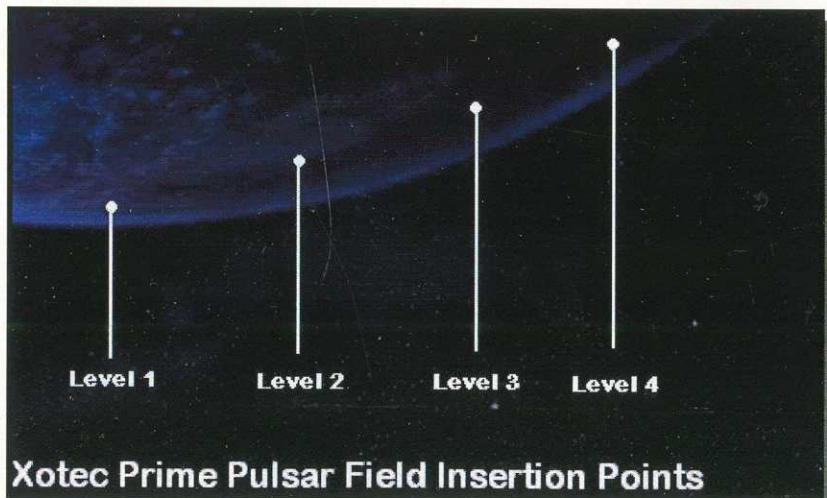
The Z2PA Advanced Calculation Computer uses these two switches to determine the starting resolution of your scan of the Pulsar Fields. Changing the settings on these two switches will change how far in the computer begins its scan of the Xotec Pulsar fields, and subsequently, how difficult your initial attack will be. The very outmost Pulsar Fields are less complicated than the inner ones, due to the subatomic tendencies of the particles that make up the field.

You may bypass the outer fields if you wish, and go directly to the second, third, or fourth Pulsar Field to begin your assault. Be warned, however, that the earlier fields will provide useful practice for the far more difficult inner fields leading up to the planet itself. Easier fields have less colors, while more advanced ones have many. It's up to you to decide where to start. Begin at the outer field, Level 1, if you're not sure.

Left Switch	Right Switch	Level
A	A	Level 1
B	A	Level 2
A	B	Level 3
B	B	Level 4

Commander, it is imperative that you take no unnecessary risks. We've only got one chance at the Xotec Homeworld before their fleets break through our defenses and annihilate our beloved Zarilor. If you are not absolutely sure you can succeed, start with the lower fields to get some practice. Our fate is in your hands.

-Adm. Chase Tarafield



Xotec Prime Pulsar Field Insertion Points

5. Scoring

See those digits at the bottom of the Z2PA Advanced Calculation Computer's display? That's a clever tracking system the R&D boys have slapped together to give you and idea on how you're doing.

Eliminating a twelve-block chunk will really increase your score! It will take a great deal of strategy and thought to assemble a really big chunk of one color, but it's well worth the time, often wiping out half the

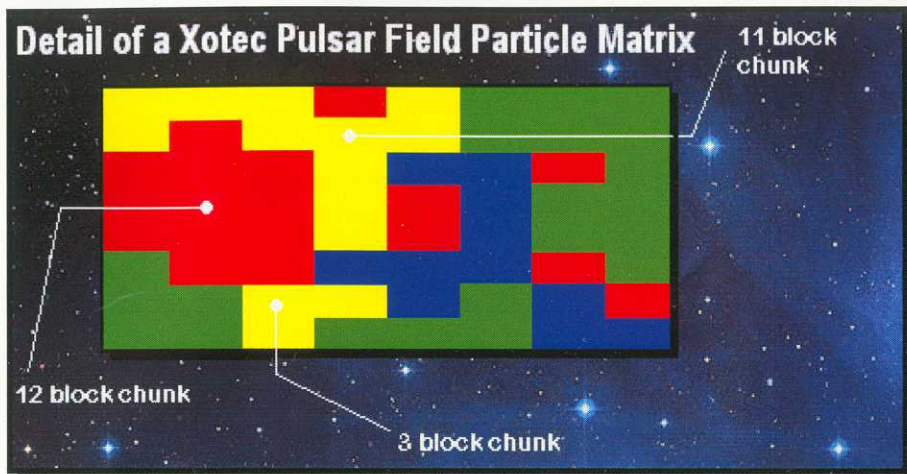


Diagram of Pulsar Field showing particle blocks

In typical fashion, they've dubbed it the 'Score', but it's really a Pulsar Particle Deterioration 'tracking meter', which keeps track of the Pulsar Field's current stability. The more you destabilize the field, the higher the meter will read. A high score means you've been particularly effective at burrowing through the Xotec defenses.

In particular, neutralizing chunks of greater size will cause greater instability in the Pulsar Fields. The more blocks that make up the chunk, the more you will destabilize the field, and the more you increase the score.

For example, eliminating a three block chunk will net you some points, but elimi-

nating a twelve-block chunk will really increase your score. This is a good thing.

So as you can see, Commander, eliminating larger chunks does a great deal more good than killing smaller ones. Taking out big chunks is easier on the earlier, less complicated fields, but is very difficult on the later levels. As you may well imagine, completely eliminating an entire Pulsar Field will net you additional points, as you will have completely destabilized it. Once a field is down, you'll have access to the next one.

Keep your wits about you Commander, this is as much like playing chess as it is about fast reflexes. Your mind is your best weapon here. Use it.

6. Tips from the Admiral

James Todd is a Software Engineer from Canberra, Australia with over 25 years programming experience. James first started developing software on a Commodore Vic-20 in 1984, and continues developing games as a hobby outside of his career as an IT consultant. James first developed the puzzle game Chunkout for the Nintendo Gameboy Color in 1999 before creating a sequel for the Nintendo Entertainment System in 2008. James continues his passion for developing on classic gaming platforms in 2009 and is pleased to bring this puzzle experience to the Atari 2600 for the first time.



James Todd

When you play Chunkout it is easy to just quickly and mindlessly delete all the chunks in sight without formulating a strategy of how you are going to tackle a given layout. Without using too much thought when playing you will soon find yourself trailing behind the scores of your friends and family who have caught on to the tricks of playing. When I play Chunkout on the lower levels, I first look over the board to see which color appears to be the dominant color for that given layout. There will usually be one color that has formed a bigger chunk from the start. From there I try and remove smaller chunks of the other colors that are impeding smaller pieces of that dominant color from joining onto the main chunk. Through this I build the biggest chunk possible before removing it in one go. Deleting all of the blocks to get a 'Chunkout' must also be in the back of your mind as the bonus points really do help you on the scoreboard. The higher levels of difficulty require a different strategy, as you should really aim to get those 'Chunkout' bonus points ahead of deleting big chunks as the higher number of colors make it more difficult to clear all the blocks in a given Pulsar Field, without a lot of careful thinking and strategy.

Good luck and have fun. I'd love to hear about your experiences with Chunkout through either AtariAge or NintendoAge.

James Todd (aka Zzap)