

Crystal Mines FAQ

by qqwref

Updated on Jun 25, 2004

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1. Basics

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1A. Introduction and Story

The basic story is this: you live in the year 2265. You have spent all of the money you've ever had to buy a special mining robot, because you want to become ridiculously wealthy by mining a planet that has just been discovered. Your robot uses energy balls and TNT to dig through rock and mud and find crystals. It's pretty dangerous inside the planet, as there are many creatures that want to destroy your robot, but if you control your robot correctly then it will make it out of the caves with plenty of expensive crystals.

Crystal Mines was programmed in 1989 by Ken Beckett (and some other game designers) of Color Dreams, Inc.

1B. Moving Around

This game has very simple controls, which work very well with the game. Use the arrow keys to move yourself around or to push things; use the A button to fire an energy blast; use the B button to drop a bomb; use Start to pause; and hold both Start and Select at the same time to self-destruct and restart the level. That may not seem really easy, but after playing one level the controls are almost second nature.

2. Game Elements

2A. Dirt, Boulders, and Rocks

The most common obstacles in the game are dirt, boulders, and rocks. Each of these comes in more than one variety.

Dirt looks perfectly square, and comes in two types: soft and hard dirt. Soft dirt is basically an orange square with a few brown and grey dots in it. Hard dirt looks like a brown square with dark brown and green dots in it. Dirt is a common obstacle, found in every level. Soft dirt takes one energy hit to be destroyed, while hard dirt takes two; but both kinds of dirt can be destroyed with one explosion.

Boulders look rounded. There are five kinds of boulders: soft, hard, explosive, impervious, and radioactive. A soft boulder looks sort of light and has a grey border; it can be destroyed with an explosion or three energy balls. A hard boulder looks darker; it takes two explosions to destroy it, and it cannot be destroyed with energy balls at all. Explosive boulders have light specks, but they look mostly dark grey; if they are hit with an energy beam or exploded they will detonate and set off their own explosion. Impervious boulders, which are almost completely grey, cannot be destroyed by any means. Radioactive boulders change color; they take three explosions to be destroyed, will make an energy ball shot at them bounce back, and will make you radioactive if you stay near them too long (More on radioactivity in Section 2B). All boulders will roll off rounded objects, which include crystals (Section 2B) and other boulders. Boulders fall towards the bottom of the screen; if a boulder, while falling, hits an enemy, that enemy (unless it is a Gas Creature; see Section 2D) will die. If a falling boulder touches you, you will die. Boulders will not fall if they are not moving and if you are directly underneath them. You can push boulders left and right.

Rocks look squarish. There are two types of rocks: impervious and radioactive. The impervious rock looks like a grey bordered square; it cannot be destroyed, it just sits there forever. The radioactive rock (which changes colors), however, can be destroyed, with three explosions. If you get too close to a radioactive rock, you will become radioactive (see Section 2C). Rocks do not fall in any direction and cannot change their position.

2B. Other Objects

There are, of course, other objects in the game. Some of these help you, and some are just obstacles.

The crystal is the most important object in the game. The goal of every single level is to collect a certain amount of these. Crystals look like bluish-white diamonds. If a crystal falls on an enemy, it will destroy that enemy; if a crystal falls on you, you may die. Crystals can be squished by falling impervious boulders, but that is the only way that they can be destroyed. You get 100 points for each crystal you collect.

Mud looks orange, with brown veins running through it and some green bits. Mud grows into an adjacent space every once in a while; it can even grow into dirt. If mud grows into lava (see below), however, it will create a hard boulder. If you hit mud with one of your energy balls, it will turn into hard mud. Mud and hard mud can both be destroyed by an explosion, but when hard mud is blown up it creates a crystal. Mud can grow into, and then replace, hard mud.

Lava looks dark red with grey veins. It grows, like mud, but can grow into many more things. Lava can take over hard mud, soft boulders, and even crystals but if it grows into mud it creates a hard boulder. If lava tries to grow into an explosive boulder or an active bomb the boulder or bomb will explode. Lava is destroyed by explosions.

When you press B, you place an active bomb on the floor. This active bomb will explode in 3 seconds, but if it is hit by an energy blast or explosion or if lava grows into it then it will explode before that. Explosions destroy the spaces directly adjacent or diagonal to the center of the explosion; if you are caught in one of these spaces you will die.

2C. Powerups

As you destroy boulders, dirt, and other obstacles, you will find powerups. Not all powerups are good, but most are. Powerups are usually hidden under things, and they will show themselves when what they are hidden under is removed. Note that powerups can be squished by boulders. When you get a temporary powerup, you will see an icon in your status bar that will blink and then disappear when the time is up.

The bag of gold looks like an orange bag in an orange frame. When collected, it will give you 1000 points.

Rapid fire looks like an energy ball in the middle of a grey-framed red rectangle. When collected, it will increase the number of your robot's energy balls that can be out at a time.

Range increase looks like an energy ball with lines behind it in the middle of a grey-framed red rectangle. When collected, it will increase the distance that your energy balls can travel. There is a maximum distance, however.

1 bomb stockpile, 3 bomb stockpile, and 10 bomb stockpile are items that look like an active bomb with a number over a grey background. They give you, respectively, one, three, and ten bombs. If you run out of bombs, you can't place any more active bombs.

Creature protection looks like a robot made out of white dots. It will allow you to pass through any enemy (and not be seen by enemies either) for a certain period of time.

Explosion protection looks like a shield with a lightning bolt on it. This allows you to survive an explosion, but only works for a certain amount of time.

Mud/lava protection allows you to walk through mud or lava for a certain period of time. It looks like two blue things with white borders on top of each other.

Radiation protection looks like a blue vial filled with white liquid. If you are not radioactive, it prevents you from becoming radioactive for a certain amount of time; if you are radioactive, it heals you. Being radioactive is very dangerous; your robot starts flashing, and if you do not get this item you will die in a few seconds.

Freeze timer is a blue clock in a white frame. It stops the game timer for a few seconds; this powerup isn't very useful.

Freeze robot looks like a tiny robot with lines leading to a white frame. This powerup is not good for you; it is invisible, and appears when you walk over it. This freezes you so you can't move for three or four seconds.

Extra robot looks like a picture of a robot in a white frame. It gives you one extra life.

The exit square is a flashing colored square. It appears (accompanied with a brief flash of light) when you collect the crystal quota for the level you're on. Walking into this transports you to the next level and gives you extra points for the extra bombs and time you have.

2D. Enemies

Of course, no action game would be complete without enemies. There are plenty of enemies in this game.

Soft rock creatures are orangish humanoids made of rock. You can destroy them with three energy balls for 100 points, an explosion for 200 points, or a falling object for 400 points. If you hit this creature with an energy ball it will become much faster. Soft rock creatures move along a wall.

Hard rock creatures are brown humanoids made of rock. They can be destroyed with two explosions for 500 points or a falling object for 1000 points. Like the soft rock creature, if you hit this creature with an energy ball it will speed up. Hard rock creatures move along a wall.

Impervious creatures are grey humanoids made of rock that can only be destroyed with a falling object. Destroying one gives you 2000 points. Impervious creatures move along a wall.

Radioactive creatures are flashing humanoids. They move very quickly, and they can turn other creatures radioactive by touching them, and so they are very dangerous. They can be destroyed with three explosions for 1500 points or a falling object for 3000 points. Energy balls will reflect off these creatures. Radioactive creatures move along a wall. Other creatures can be made into these creatures by passing a radioactive boulder or rock.

Mud creatures are orange ball-like things. They move in a straight line, changing direction when they hit an obstacle and stopping when hit with an energy ball. Mud creatures can move freely through mud and hard mud; they can be destroyed with an explosion for 400 points or a falling object for 800

points.

Lava creatures are red ball-like things. They move in a straight line, changing direction when they hit an obstacle. If you hit a lava creature with an energy ball, it will move faster. Lava creatures move freely through lava; they can be destroyed with an explosion for 500 points or a falling object for 1000 points.

Gas creatures are extremely dangerous; they can move freely through anything. A gas creature always moves towards the robot, and it can only be destroyed with an explosion, which will give you 1000 points.

3. Hints

Not yet! Sorry.

4. Other Stuff

4A. Legal Information

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4B. Thanks to...

I would like to thank:

The people at Color Dreams, especially Ken Beckett, for creating this game
The people behind www.planetnintendo.com/thewarpzone/colordreamsshine1/, Dave Allwein and Nick M., for helping me get information on this game
tsrken@voicenet.com, who reproduced Crystal Mines's original manual, which can be found at http://www.planetnintendo.com/thewarpzone/colordreamsshine1/manuals/crystal_mines.txt

4C. Version History

1.0 - 06/23/04. Created Sections 1-2 and 4.
Checked that formatting was in 79 chars/line.

4D. Contact

I can be contacted only through e-mail. If you have any questions, corrections,

comments, or requests, mail to mzrg@verizon.net. You MUST use "Crystal Mines
FAQ" as the Subject, or I will delete your message.

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