



By Trent Jackson

Intergalactic Master Mind

Intergalactic Master Mind is a variant of the original MB, 'Milton Bradley', board game version of Master Mind. Whilst much more modern, I reference it directly back to the original since the concept is basically the same. The layout is arguably original, it has some additional features made possible because it's a piece of software rather than a physical game board, but the object of the game is still as per the original which dates back more than 25 years. Sadly, Modern software-based versions of Master Mind are often very underrated. Possibly because few people know how the game works. Here I attempt to address this problem with some detailed explanation on how to play the game.

This modern day software-based version, like with most others, requires the player to solve a code like puzzle that comprises of 4 elements. With Intergalactic Master Mind these elements are 4 differently coloured aliens that maybe arranged in any order and, also, repeated if the multiples option is set. Arguably it's more of a code rather than a puzzle since it ever so closely follows a base 4 numbering system. Unlike with binary, which is a base 2 system, 1's & 0's, Intergalactic Master Mind uses colours. Red, green, yellow & blue. For only the fact of colours Vs 1's & 0's and also base 2 vS base 4, the puzzles are quite very similar to binary codes. In fact, the best way to play the game is to use forward and reverse binary thinking tactics.

Starting a New Game

Clicking on the 'New Game' button, (top far right of the screen) causes the commencement of a fresh game to start. Your score is reset and so is the game time. This button can be pressed at anytime to initiate a new start....



Far right of the screen is where you will find some options and readouts for the game. There are a few sound effects that the game supports and these can be disabled by removing the tick from its check box at any given time.

The 'Allow Multiples' option determines the overall difficulty. If ticked, the randomly generated puzzle is allowed to have multiple occurrences of the same coloured alien. this in effect makes the game much harder since there are more possible combinations with still only 8 attempts at solving it. The code / puzzle could be 1 of 24 possibilities without having multiples or, a staggering 1 of 256 if multiples are allowed.

Five LED readouts cater for displaying, defined time limits, game time, best time, total wins and losses. If you enforce a time limit on yourself, you lose the entire game if this time elapses. It's best to start of with out using a time limit since it means a whole lot less stress during your first few plays.

Playing The Game

An alien of your choice of colour can be placed in a column on the current row by clicking one of the four buttons located bottom middle of the screen. In other words, each column has four buttons. Your first selection isn't final by any means. You can change your selection at anytime and in any order that you so wish. By having four buttons for each column selection is made fast. The colour of the button represents the actual colour of the alien that will be placed in the field after you click it. Red, green, yellow and blue coloured aliens will always be in the puzzle that you need to solve if the multiples option isn't set. However, this is not so the case if the multiples option has been enabled. In this instance, it's possible for the puzzle to have two or more of each colour. Two blues and perhaps two greens.



Directly below each column is a step and repeat of the four coloured buttons. You must select one for each column in the row before clicking on enter to compute your attempt...

If you're extremely lucky, I mean extremely, extremely lucky!, you'll win the game on your first attempt at solving the code. From a more 'realistic' sense, you're doing well thus far if you see one or more of the red squares at the end of the row light up.



Two squares shown lit up red in the screen grab above. This means that two of the selections are correct. Which exact two is up to you to decide. This indication of two being correct is your only tool to aid you in playing the game. From here on in you need to apply calculated 'process of elimination' in order to solve the puzzle / code within another seven attempts. For example, in your next attempt you may swap the green with the yellow. This may possibly solve it. Or, perhaps swapping the green with the blue may serve better luck. In the first few attempts the game is yes, based on a lot of luck.

When you reach the 3rd or 4th attempt, relying on luck will most certainly lose you the game. You need to carefully analyze all of your previous attempts before making your next. It is possible to solve the code normally before the 5th attempt, every attempt. On my better days I can do this. Sometimes, I need all eight tries in order to solve it. Other times, when I'm a bit 'burnt out' I go nowhere with the game. The game requires complex thought sometimes.

TIPs

1. Binary thoughts are good for the sole.
2. Analyze your previous attempts to ensure that you don't repeat an incorrect try.
3. Don't bother with multiples; it's way too hard.
4. Take complete wild guesses until you get at least two squares lit up.

All The 24 Possible Combinations Without Multiples

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'=====
'*combinations shown with no repeats. If
'repeats were allowed then the total num
'of combinations would be 256, (4 xy4).
'Base 4 system since we have 4 different
'images...
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'=====
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		'16	8	4	2	1'
		'=====				
'r, g, b, y		1	1	1	1	1
'r, g, y, b		1	1	1	1	0
'r, y, b, g		1	1	1	0	1
'r, y, g, b		1	1	1	0	0
'r, b, g, y		1	1	0	1	1
'r, b, y, g		1	1	0	1	0
'g, r, b, y		1	1	0	0	1
'g, r, y, b		1	1	0	0	0
'g, y, b, r		1	0	1	1	1
'g, y, r, b		1	0	1	1	0
'g, b, r, y		1	0	1	0	1
'g, b, y, r	IN	1	0	1	0	0
'y, r, b, g	5 BIT	1	0	0	1	1
'y, r, g, b	Bin	1	0	0	1	0
'y, g, r, b		1	0	0	0	1
'y, g, b, r		1	0	0	0	0
'y, b, r, g		0	1	1	1	1
'y, b, g, r		0	1	1	1	0
'b, y, r, g		0	1	1	0	1
'b, y, g, r		0	1	1	0	0
'b, g, r, y		0	1	0	1	1
'b, g, y, r		0	1	0	1	0
'b, r, g, y		0	1	0	0	1
'b, r, y, g		0	1	0	0	0

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'=====
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'r = red, g = green, y = yellow, b = blue
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