QUBLIX

Instruction Manual

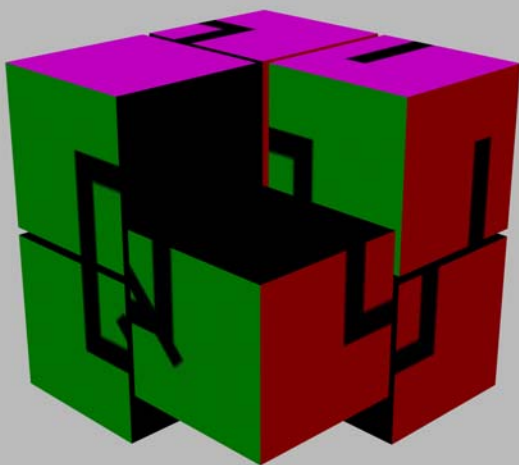PouncingKitten Games

Warning:

If you are prone to photosensitivity or photosensitive seizures, you should not use this product. If you feel dizzy, disoriented, nauseous or suffer from convulsions, immediately stop using this product and seek medical attention.

This product uses a keyboard for input. Excessive and repetitive use of a keyboard may result in a repetitive stress injury. It is important to take regular breaks while playing to help prevent such injuries. If you feel pain or swelling in your hands or arms, immediately stop using this product and seek medical attention.

Important Notice:

This version of Qublix is intended for submission to the 2007 Independent Games Festival (Student Showcase Competition). It is not to be distributed or transferred outside of the PouncingKitten Games website without permission.

Contents

What is Qublix?

Qublix is an evolution of the classic two dimensional sliding tile puzzle (sometimes called the 15-tile puzzle). Instead of having a single, two dimensional puzzle, players are required to complete a sliding tile puzzle on six sides of a three dimensional cube. The edges of each puzzle are shared with the puzzles on each adjacent side. As pieces are moved and aligned on one side, pieces on the adjacent sides will also be moved.
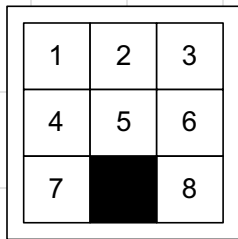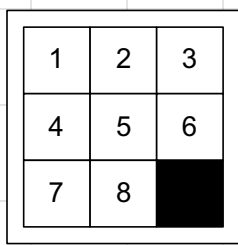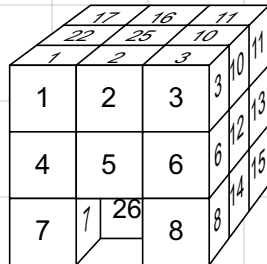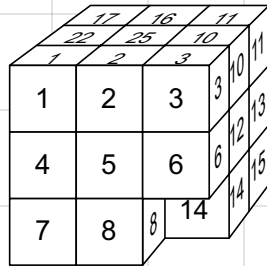
Old Style   New Style

Installation

The process detailed below is intended for a default Windows XP configuration and may be different for your system.

From a CDROM: The autorun feature may be used to install Qublix by inserting the CDROM into a CDROM compatible drive and following the installation prompts. If the autorun feature does not function or has been disabled, the installation program may be started as follows:

1. Double-click on "My Computer" from the Windows desktop.
2. Open the CD drive which contains the Qublix installation CDROM.
3. Double-click the "Setup.exe" program.
4. Follow the installation prompts to complete the installation process.

From a downloaded file:

1. Double-click on "My Computer" from the Windows desktop.
2. Navigate through the Windows Explorer window to the downloaded file's location.
3. Double-click the "QublixInstall.exe" program.
4. Follow the installation prompts to complete the installation process.

Uninstallation

Qublix can be removed through the "Add or Remove Programs" feature of the Windows Control Panel:

1. Click "Start" from the Windows taskbar.
2. Select "Settings" followed by "Control Panel".
3. Doubleclick "Add or Remove Programs".
4. From the "Change or Remove Programs" tab, find and click the "Qublix for Windows".
5. Click the "Remove" button.
6. Click "Yes" when prompted to finish removing Qublix.

Note: Some files (configuration settings, high scores, user created puzzle files) may remain after uninstallation and will need to be removed manually.

Default Controls

See "Controller Settings Menu" for information on control customization.
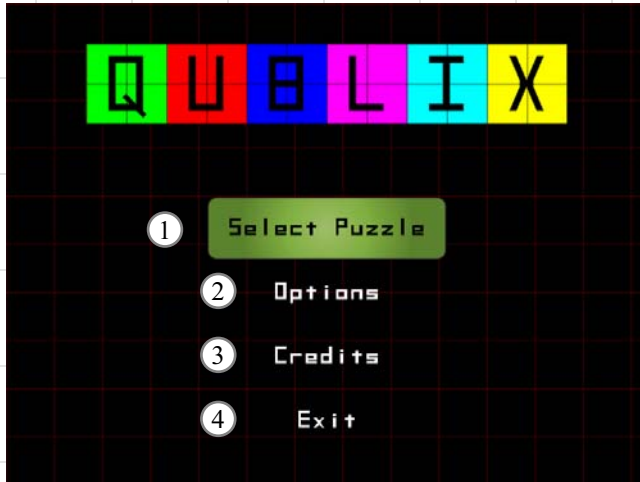
Menu controls

Change menu selection up:	Up Arrow*
Change menu selection down:	Down Arrow*
Change menu selection left:	Left Arrow*
Change menu selection right:	Right Arrow*
Confirm:	Enter
Cancel:	Escape

Puzzle controls

Move block up:	Up Arrow*
Move block down:	Down Arrow*
Move block left:	Left Arrow*
Move block right:	Right Arrow*
Rotate puzzle up:	'W' or Mouse Up
Rotate puzzle down:	'S' or Mouse Down
Rotate puzzle left:	'A' or Mouse Left
Rotate puzzle right:	'D' or Mouse Right
Pause:	Tab
Zoom in:	'+' (Plus)
Zoom out:	'-' (Minus)

* The four directional keys are shared between the menu and puzzle controls. Changes to these keys will affect both the "change menu selection" and "move block" commands.

Main Menu

Select Puzzle Menu

(1) Select Puzzle: Puzzles and difficulty levels are chosen from this screen (see "Select Puzzle Menu").
(2) Options: Allows changes to the controls, game options and whether or not sound is played (see "Options Menu").
(3) Credits: Displays information about Qublix.
(4) Exit: Exits the Qublix program.

(1) Puzzle name: The name of the selected puzzle is shown here. This may not be the same as the file name of the puzzle.
(2) Difficulty: The currently selected difficulty level is shown here. It can be changed by moving left or right. Four difficulty levels are available to choose from: Easy, Medium, Hard and Impossible.
(3) Puzzle size: The number of blocks per side for the selected puzzle. For example, a 3x3x3 puzzle is three blocks wide, by three blocks high, by three blocks deep.
(4) Best completion time: If the puzzle has been completed, the time is shown here in Hours:Minutes:Seconds.
(5) Additional selections indicator: These arrows appear when the puzzle list can be scrolled to select more puzzles.
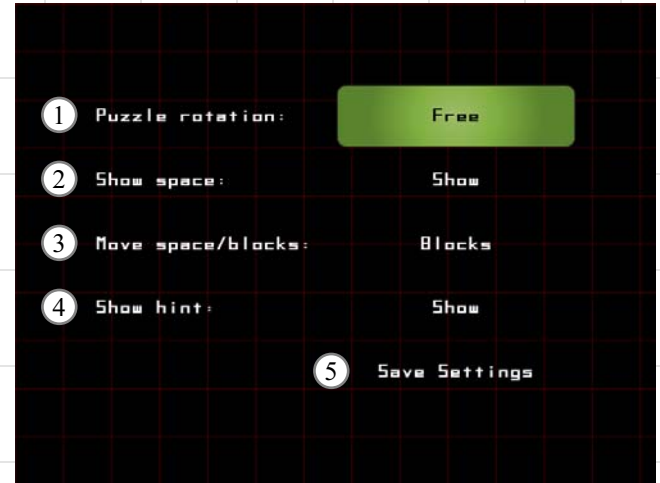
Options Menu

(1) Game Settings: Gameplay related settings are changed here (see "Game Settings Menu").
(2) Controller Settings: Allows the command keys and mouse behavior to be changed (see "Controller Settings Menu").
(3) Sound Settings: Sound effects can be enabled or disabled from this menu (see "Sound Settings Menu").

Game Settings Menu

(1) Puzzle rotation: "Free" rotation allows the puzzle to be rotated by any degree and allows several puzzle sides to be seen at the same time. "Step" rotation locks the puzzle rotation to 90 degree increments and only allows one side at a time to be seen.
(2) Show space: Shows or hides the block that is normally removed so that blocks are able to slide.
(3) Move space/blocks: "Space" moves the space (i.e. "up" moves the space up). "Blocks" moves the blocks surrounding the space (i.e. "up" moves the block above the space down).
(4) Show hint: Shows or hides the completed puzzle "hint" when the game is paused.
(5) Save Settings: Saves the setting changes and returns to the previous menu.

Controller Settings Menu

Sound Settings Menu

(1) Control setting: Changes the keyboard key for the selected command. To change the command key, select the command to change, press the confirm button and then press the new key to use for that command. If a duplicate key is pressed, the old command for that key will need a new key assigned to it before the settings may be saved.
(2) Mouse axis setting: Flips the X or Y axis and changes the direction of puzzle rotation when using the mouse.
(3) Save Settings: Saves the setting changes and returns to the previous menu.
(4) Additional selections indicator: These arrows appear when the settings list can be scrolled to select more

(1) Play sounds: Plays or mutes all of the sounds effects for the game.
(2) Save Settings: Saves the setting changes and returns to the previous menu.

Play Screen
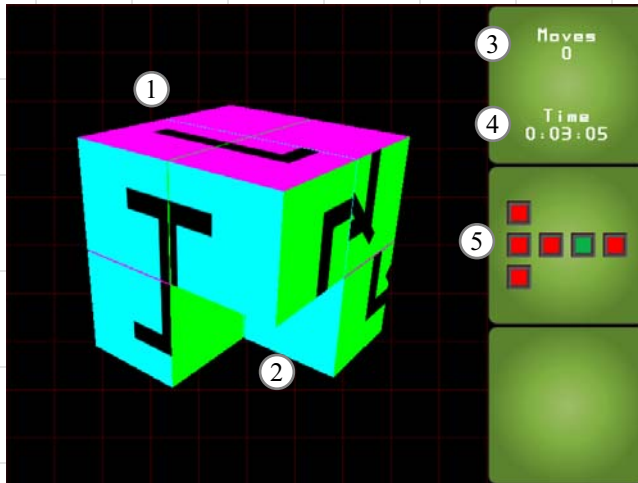
(1) Active Qublix puzzle.
(2) Removed space. If "show space" is set to true, then this block will flash.
(3) Number of moves taken so far.
(4) Current play time shown in Hours:Minutes:Seconds.
(5) Completed sides indicator. Red boxes are incomplete sides, green boxes are completed sides.

Pause Screen
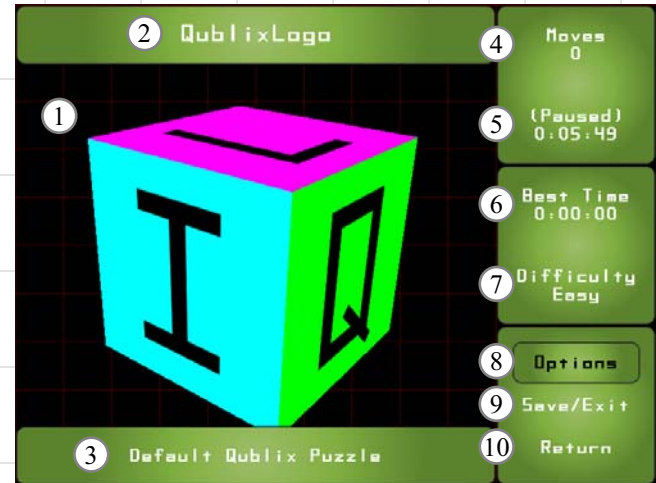
(1) Completed puzzle. Shown if "show hint" is set to true.
(2) Current puzzle name.
(3) Current puzzle description.
(4) Number of moves taken so far.
(5) Current play time shown in Hours:Minutes:Seconds.
(6) Best completion time. If the puzzle has been completed, time is shown in Hours:Minutes:Seconds.
(7) Current difficulty level.
(8) Opens the Options menu.
(9) Opens the Save/Exit menu.
(10) Unpauses the game and returns to the play screen.

How to Play

Qublix plays just like a typical sliding tile puzzle. Once a puzzle is selected and loaded, a block is chosen at random to be removed (it is called the "space") and the remaining blocks are moved at random. The higher the difficulty level, the higher the number of random moves.

Each Qublix puzzle contains a picture on each of its six sides. Portions of these pictures are attached to each block. As the blocks are moved around, the picture for that side is mixed up:
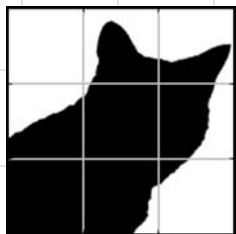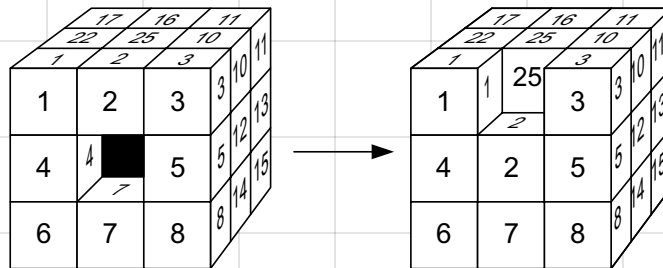

Before mixing
(Complete)
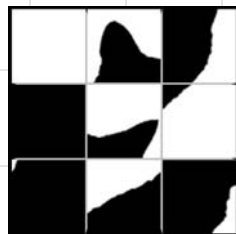
After mixing
(Incomplete)

Finishing a Qublix puzzle is simple, just complete the picture on each of the six sides. Having all of the pictures completed at the same time is the hard part.

The problem is that each time a block is moved, it changes the picture arrangement on each side the block is currently a part of. Here is an example:

The number 2 block moves down.
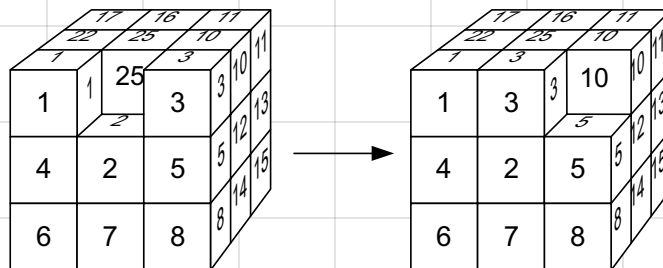

The number 3 block moves left.

When the number 2 block is moved as shown above, it changes both the front and top sides of the puzzle. However, when the number 3 block is moved, it changes three sides (front, top and right) of the puzzle.

Saving & Loading Progress

Qublix puzzles can have anywhere between 8 (2x2x2) and 1362 (16x16x16) individual blocks to move around. For larger puzzles, it would be impossible to complete in a single sitting. Fortunately, progress can be saved and puzzles can be completed at leisure.

How to Save:

From the pause menu, select the "Save/Exit" option. The screen below will be shown:
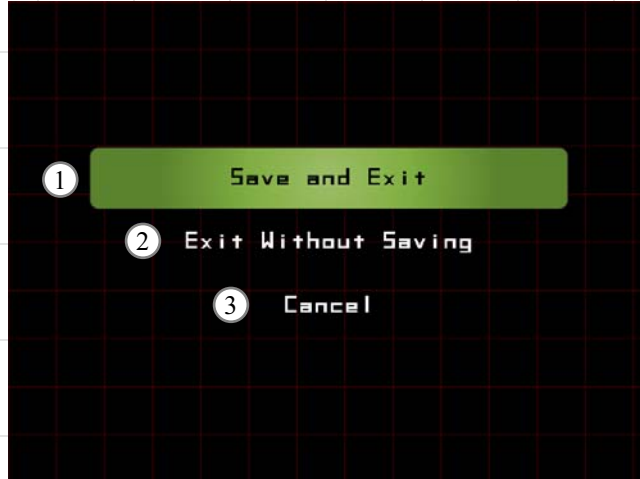
(1) Save and Exit: Saves the progress for the current puzzle and returns to the puzzle selection menu. This will overwrite any saved progress for the current puzzle.
(2) Exit Without Saving: Returns to the puzzle selection menu, but any progress is lost.
(3) Cancel: Returns to the pause screen without saving and without losing any progress.

Each puzzle can have several progress saves. However, there can only be one save for each difficulty level for a puzzle. Also, once a puzzle has been completed, any saved progress for that difficulty level is automatically removed.

How to Load:

The game checks for a progress save every time a puzzle is started. If a progress save exists for the chosen puzzle and difficulty level, a load progress menu is displayed.

If "yes" is selected from the load menu, the previously saved progress (including the number of moves and play time) is loaded. If "no" is selected, the puzzle is instead loaded and randomized as normal. The progress save is not removed if "no" is selected, but it may be overwritten by a new save.

Qublix Editor

The Qublix Editor allows anyone to create and modify Qublix puzzles. These puzzles can then be shared and played by anyone with Qublix installed. The editor looks like this:

①

②

③
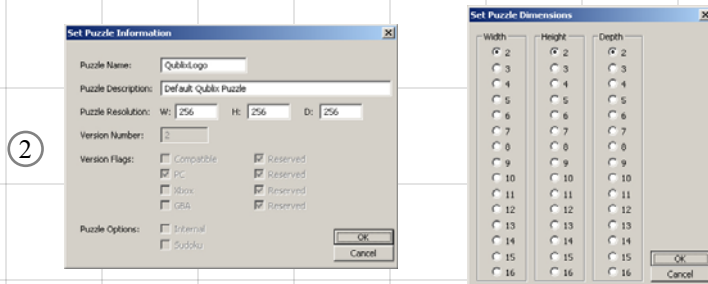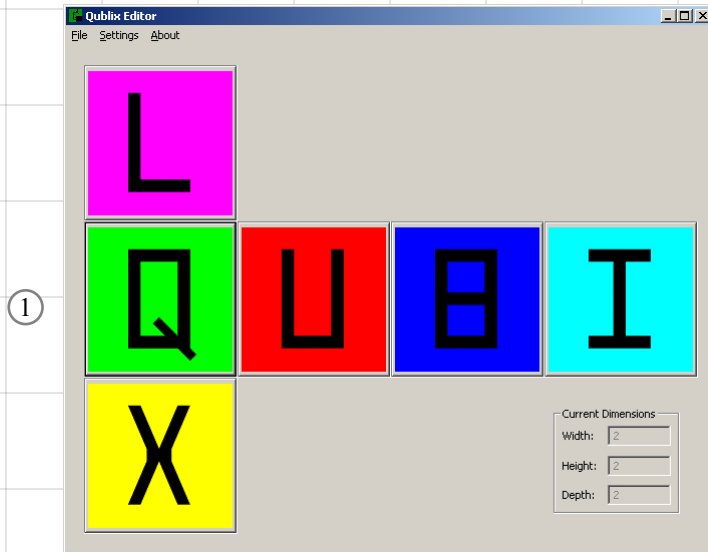
(1) Main editor window: This window displays the unfolded Qublix puzzle. Each of the six side pictures can be loaded from here.

(2) Puzzle information window: Selecting "Set Information" from the "Settings" menu or pressing Ctrl+I opens this dialog box. The name, description and side image resolution can be set here.

(3) Puzzle dimensions window: Selecting "Set Dimensions" from the "Settings" menu or pressing Ctrl+D opens this dialog box. The number of blocks for each puzzle dimension (width, height and depth) can be set here.

Creating a New Puzzle:

1. When the editor is first started, a default blank puzzle is ready to be filled in. If a puzzle is already loaded, "New" can be selected from the "File" menu or Ctrl+N can be pressed to create a blank puzzle.

2. Each of the six puzzle sides must have a picture assigned to it. Clicking on each of the six buttons allows a picture to be selected and loaded. Once loaded, the image is displayed on the button. The same image may be used for different sides, but it must be loaded individually for each side. Valid image formats include: BMP, GIF, JPG and PNG.

3. The puzzle name and description should be set. The name can be up to 16 characters long with no restrictions. The description can be up to 64 characters long. Both

should properly describe the puzzle being created and will be displayed in Qublix when the puzzle is played.

4. The puzzle dimensions default to 2x2x2. If the puzzle needs to have different dimensions, they can be set from the "Set Puzzle Dimensions" dialog box.

5. The puzzle can now be saved by selecting "Save" from the "File" menu or pressing Ctrl+S. The filename for the puzzle should be unique to prevent other puzzles from being copied over.

Editing Existing Puzzles:

Existing puzzles can be loaded by choosing "Open" from the "File" menu or pressing Ctrl+O. If Qublix has been properly installed, puzzles ending with the QBX extension can be opened by doubleclicking them from Windows Explorer.

Playing New Puzzles:

To play a new puzzle, simply copy it into the Puzzles directory and reload the Qublix game.

Editor Notes:

The editor creates a new internal puzzle ID each time a puzzle is saved. This ID is used by Qublix for saving puzzle completion times. If an existing puzzle is saved, even if the puzzle itself is unchanged, a new ID will be created and any previous completion times will be lost.

Loaded images will be resized to the resolutions specified in the "Set Puzzle Information" dialog box. For best results, images should be resized to the desired dimensions by an external graphics program. The minimum image resolution is 128 pixels. The maximum image resolution is 1024 pixels.

Qublix Skin

The interface for Qublix is completely editable. The graphical elements for the game skin are stored in a single PNG image file named "skin.png". The image file is 1024 pixels wide by 512 pixels high. If this file is changed or replaced, the image resolution should remain the same.

The skin file contains the following defined elements and pixel positions:

Element	Start X	Start Y	Width	Height
PlayMoves	0	0	256	256
PlayComp	256	0	256	256
PlayBlank	512	0	256	256
PauseBest	768	0	256	256
PauseMenu	768	256	256	256
SmSelection	384	352	224	64
MdSelection	0	352	384	96
LgSelection	0	256	768	96
UpIndicator	0	448	64	64
DnIndicator	64	448	64	64
SideComp	128	448	64	64
SideIncomp	196	448	64	64

Skin Notes:

Creating a new skin or modifying the default skin is only recommended for advanced users with knowledge of graphical editing tools.

A backup of the skin file should be made before attempting to edit or replace. If the skin file cannot be loaded or if the graphical elements are not aligned properly, the Qublix interface may be unreadable.

Each graphical element should be designed so that there is at least one pixel between the element and its boundaries as given in the element table. This is necessary to prevent element overlapping when the images are stretched for various resolutions.

Product Support

We welcome all feedback, both good and bad. If you have any comments, please visit our forums or send us an email using the contact information below.

This product is provided without express or implied warranty. For questions or product support, please use the contact information below.

Contact Information:

Join the PouncingKitten Games forums to discuss Qublix or to seek help for any problems:

Email Qublix support at:

Credits

Qublix is a presentation of PouncingKitten Games.

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