



Checkers User Guide

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Contact information

Purple Software Limited
Purple House
Corporation Street
High Wycombe
Bucks HP13 6TQ, UK

Phone: +44 (0) 1494 750300

Fax: +44 (0) 1494 750301

e-Mail: info@purplesoft.com
support@purplesoft.com

Web: <http://www.purplesoftware.com>

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Introduction

Welcome to Checkers

Checkers is compatible with devices that use version 3 or later of the Palm™ Operating System, including the Palm III™ and Palm V™ organizers.

This User Guide covers all platforms and rather than referring to any specific device, will simply refer to ‘your handheld computer’. Readers should note that, unless otherwise stated, the same functionality is supported by all handheld computers available at the time of writing.

About this document

The Checkers User Guide explains how to use the Checkers application. In so doing, the Guide assumes that the reader is familiar with the standard features of their organizer / handheld computer.

The Guide is also supplied in electronic form as a Portable Document Format (.pdf) file. Software to display .pdf files is freely available from Adobe Systems Incorporated and can be acquired from their World Wide Web site at <http://www.adobe.com/acrobat/>.

Rules of the Game

The object of the game of Checkers is to capture all your opponent's pieces. Pieces move one square at a time diagonally towards the opposite side of the board such that they always remain on the same coloured squares.

A piece is captured by jumping diagonally over that piece into a vacant square. If there is a move that can capture a piece, that move must be played regardless of whether that move is beneficial or not.

If a piece can continue to jump over opponent's pieces, capturing multiple pieces, it must do so.

Introduction

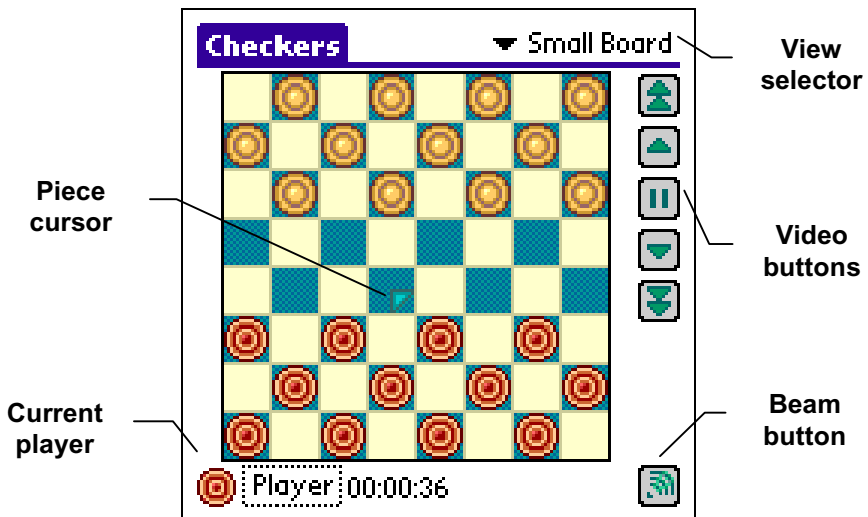
When a piece reaches the opposite side of the board it is promoted to a King. Kings move one square at a time diagonally in any direction on the board.

Using Checkers

Running Checkers

When you first run Checkers, application information is briefly displayed and a new game is started. The game starts with you as the "Player" using the black pieces against a relatively unskilled computer opponent playing the white pieces. Black is the 1st to move.

The Checkers Board



Checkers offers a variety of views of the board and by default the "Medium board" is presented. The various views make use of a variety of standard components. These are described below.

Selecting views

Tap the View selector to present a popup list from which you can select any of the available views of the board. Note that you can also select any view from the **Show** menu.

The Current player

This shows the name of the player whose turn it is to move. A clock showing the playing time is also displayed. Some views show both players and in these cases, in addition to the clock being updated, the current player is indicated by an arrow.

Tapping the player name presents the **Player Details** dialog which allows you to change the name of the player, whether they are a human or computer player and for computer players, the skill level.

Checkers maintains a list of available players. Facilities to create, amend or delete players are described later in this document.

Making moves

The Piece cursor indicates the currently selected piece. Tap a piece to select it. To move the selected piece, you can either tap the destination or drag the piece to the desired square.

When you tap a destination square or a computer player makes a move, the piece is animated and moves to the new location. You can control the speed of animation by selecting the **Preferences** dialog from the **Options** menu.

If you try to make an illegal move, Checkers will display an appropriate error message. Remember that if an opponent's piece can be captured with a move, you must play that move.

Note that Checkers also supports selecting and moving pieces using a keyboard. Use the cursor keys to move the cursor and the Enter or Space keys to select or place a piece. You can also use the Esc key to return a piece to its original square.

Checkers offers a range of features that can help with making moves:

- If you want to be reminded of the last move made in the game, select the **Show Last Move** option from the **Move** menu.
- If you want to see the legal moves that are available for the currently selected piece, select the **Show Legal Moves** item from the **Move** menu.

- If you are unsure about the type of the current piece, select the **Piece Name** item from the **Options** menu.
- If you would like a hint as to the best move to play, select the **Hint** item from the **Move** menu.
- If you are playing a computer opponent and would like to force them to make a move before they have completed examining all the possibilities, select the **Move now** item from the **Move** menu.

Reviewing a game

The Video buttons allow you to review the current game. Tap the desired button to undo or redo a single move or to undo or redo a series of moves. Note that when a series of moves is being undone or replayed, you can tap the Stop button to cancel the operation.

You can also undo and redo a single move by selecting the appropriate item from the **Move** menu which additionally provides options to undo or redo all moves.

Note that when you review a game by undoing or redoing moves, a computer player will be paused, so that you can examine the board position. To reactivate the computer player and continue playing, simply tap the board.

Beaming

You can share games with or play against other people by beaming games between infrared enabled PalmOS devices running the Checkers application.

Checkers maintains a list of games stored on your device. Facilities to create, amend or delete games are described later in this document.

To beam the current game, simply tap the Beam button or select the Beam game option from the **Game** menu.

When you elect to receive a beamed game, if the received game matches one already stored on your device *and* offers a valid next move from an opponent, the move is made and the new game state presented. Otherwise, the received game is added as a new entry to the list of games available.

Move List

The Game History view also presents the Move List – a scrollable list of the moves made in the current game. Any move made in the game of Checkers can be represented by one of two different move notations.

- **Co-ordinate:** Commonly called the computer format, this notation is the default notation displayed by Checkers.
- **Checkers:** Rather than use a co-ordinate system the coloured squares are simply numbered from 1 to 32. Square 1 is the coloured square at the top left of the board, square 32 is the coloured square at the bottom right of the board.

You can switch between notations by selecting the **Preferences** dialog from the **Options** menu.

Managing Players

Checkers maintains a list of players involved in any of the games stored on your device. You can add new players, delete players or amend their details by selecting the **Players** item from the **Game** menu. The list of players will then be presented.

- To create a new player, tap the **New** button. The player details dialog will then be presented with default values. If you confirm the dialog, the new player will be added to the list.
- To amend the details of an existing player, highlight the player in the list and tap the **Details** button to present the player details dialog. When you confirm the dialog, any changes will be applied.
- To delete a player, highlight the player in the list and tap the **Delete** button.

Note that when you receive a beamed game that involves a player who is not already recorded on the receiving device, the player will automatically be added to the list of players.

Managing games

Checkers allows you to store multiple games on your device. When you launch Checkers, the most recent game is presented as the current game.

You can create new games, delete games or amend their details by picking the **Select** item from the **Game** menu. The list of games will then be presented.

- To make any game in the list the current game, simply highlight the desired game and tap the **Done** button.

- To create a new game, highlight a game in the list on which you would like to base the new game and tap the **Copy** button. The game details dialog will then be presented. Amend the game details as desired and confirm the dialog to add the game to the list. You can initialise or manually set up a board position for the newly created game using the **New Game** or **Game Setup** functions described below.
- To amend the details of an existing game, highlight the game in the list and tap the **Details** button to present the game details dialog. When you confirm the dialog, any changes will be applied.
- To delete a game, highlight the game in the list and tap the **Delete** button.

Note that when you receive a beamed game that does not match any game already recorded on the receiving device, the game will automatically be added to the list.

At any time, you can reset the current game to its initial position by selecting **New Game** from the **Game** menu. Note that when you do this the move list is cleared so that it is no longer possible to redo moves that may have previously been made. If you want to retain the move list, use the **Undo all** function described above.

You can also edit the game position directly by selecting the **Game Setup** view. In this view, you can:

- Change the position of any piece by dragging it to a new location.
- Remove a piece by dragging off the board to the left or right.
- Add a new piece by dragging one of the piece types shown to the left or right of the board to the desired location.
- Set whose turn it is to move next from the board position you have defined.
- Select the players for this game.

If you confirm the Game Setup by tapping the **OK** button, any changes will be applied to the current game and any move list information will be cleared. To return to the current game, preserving the original position and any move list, tap the **Cancel** button.