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Archer Maclean's Mercury



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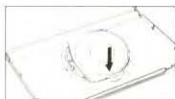
For safe use of this product, carefully read the following section of this manual and the Precautions section of the instruction manual supplied with the PSP handheld entertainment system before use. Retain both this software manual and the instruction manual for future reference.

Health precautions

- When operating the unit, play in a well-lit room and keep a safe distance from the screen.
- Avoid prolonged use of the system. Take a break of about 15 minutes during every hour of play.
- Do not use the system when you are tired or short of sleep.
- When using headphones, do not turn the volume up before putting the headphones on. Also, do not listen at loud volume levels for extended periods of time. Stop using the system immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms. If the condition persists, consult a doctor.
- Lightheadedness, nausea, or a sensation similar to motion sickness.
- Discomfort or pain in the eyes, ears, hands, arms, or any other part of the body.

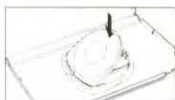
Use and handling precautions

- This disc is PSP format software and is intended for use with the PSP handheld entertainment system only. If the disc is used with other devices, damage to the disc or to the device may result.
- Depending on the software, a Memory Stick Duo™ or Memory Stick PRO Duo™ (both sold separately) may be required. Refer to the software manual for full details.
- Do not use while driving or walking. Do not use in airplanes or medical facilities where use is prohibited or restricted.
- Set the PSP handheld system's wireless network feature to off when using the PSP on trains or in other crowded locations. If used near persons with pacemakers, the signal from the PSP handheld system's wireless network feature could interfere with the proper operation of the pacemaker.
- If paused images are displayed on the screen for an extended period of time, a faint image may be left permanently on the screen.
- Store the disc in its case when not in use and keep in a place out of the reach of children. If the disc is left out this may result in warping or other damage to the disc.
- Do not leave the disc in direct sunlight, near a heat source, in a car or other places subject to high heat and humidity.
- Do not touch the opening on the rear of the disc (recording surface of the disc; see drawing). Do not allow dust, sand, foreign objects or other types of dirt to get on the disc.
- Do not block the opening with paper or tape. Also, do not write on the disc.
- If the opening area does get dirty, wipe gently with a soft cloth.
- To clean the disc, wipe the exterior surface gently with a soft cloth.
- Do not use solvents such as benzene, commercially-available cleaners not intended for CDs, or anti-static spray intended for vinyl LPs as these may damage the disc.
- Do not use cracked or deformed discs or discs that have been repaired with adhesives as these may cause system damage or malfunction.
- SCEA will not be held liable for damage resulting from the misuse of discs.



Ejecting the disc

Press the right side of the disc until it is in the position shown in the drawing and then remove it. If excess force is applied this may result in damage to the disc.



Storing the disc

Insert the bottom side of the disc and then press on the top side until it clicks into place. If the disc is not stored properly, this may result in damage to the disc.

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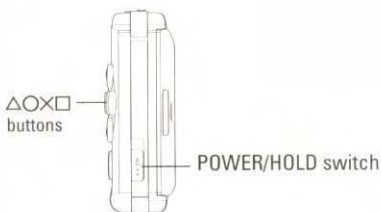
Archer Maclean's Mercury

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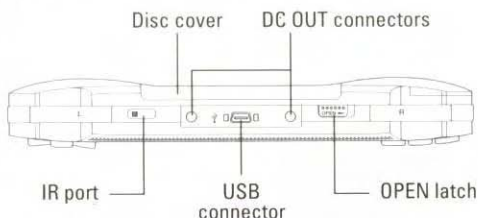
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Getting Started

Right side view



Front view



Set up your PSP™ handheld entertainment system according to the instructions in the manual supplied with the system. Turn the system on. The power indicator lights up in green and the home menu is displayed. Press the OPEN latch to open the disc cover. Insert the Archer Maclean's™ Mercuru™ UMD™ disc with the label facing the system rear, slide until fully inserted and close the disc cover. From the PSP handheld's home menu, select the Game icon and then the UMD icon. A thumbnail for the software is displayed. Select the thumbnail and press the X button of the PSP handheld to start the software. Follow the on-screen instructions and refer to this manual for information on using the software.

NOTICE: Do not eject a UMD while it is playing.

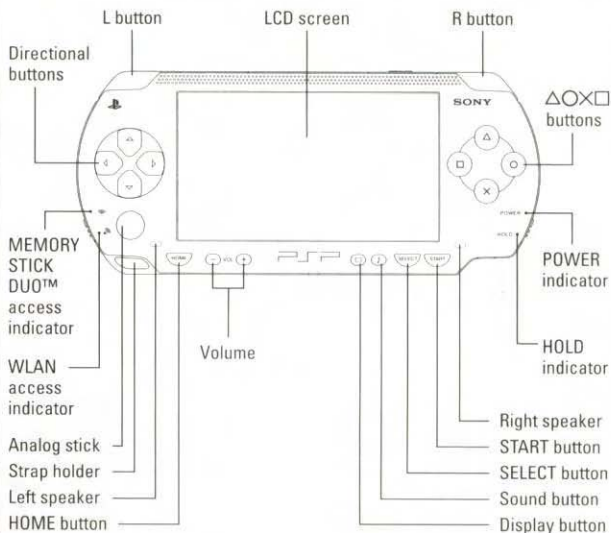
Memory Stick Duo™

Warning! Keep Memory Stick Duo media out of reach of small children, as the media could be swallowed by accident.

To save game settings and progress, insert a Memory Stick Duo into the memory stick slot of your PSP handheld. You can load saved game data from the same memory stick or any Memory Stick Duo containing previously saved games.

Starting Up

PSP™ handheld entertainment system configuration



Quick-Start Game Summary

Test your tilting dexterity against 72 levels of liquid mayhem spread across 6 game worlds!

All 6 game worlds are accessed through portals around a central game HUB. When starting a new game, only Neon (the first world) is open because it's a Tutorial World. The simple levels within guide you through elementary tilt control, use of colors, basic object interaction and so on. All tutorial levels must be completed to access the tougher levels in World 2 and beyond.

You can load or save an entire game almost at will, so you can quickly pick Mercury up and carry on exactly where you left off. It's very addictive and hours will fly by!


Each world consists of 12 levels divided into 3 Time-based, 3 Percentage-based, 3 Task-based missions, followed by 2 Combo Levels, and finally 1 Boss Level.

To unlock the next world, you must complete all levels within the current world.

Once you complete a level, you will get a Score based on time remaining, percentage of Mercury saved and tasks completed, with a bonus multiplier applied to the level type and multiplied by the world you have reached. The top 5 Scores per level are automatically saved.

There are many unlockable levels activated by improving your rank or progressing through the game. These hidden levels are designed to be ingenious and extra tough.

WLAN two player mode allows every level to be played head-to-head against a friend. You both share the same level and you see your opponent as a semi transparent blob. This will help to judge who's in the lead. Very addictive!



The communication function of this product includes software developed by the NetBSD Foundation, Inc. and its contributors. For a complete list of contributors please see <http://www.scei.co.jp/psp-license/pspnet.txt>.

Default Controls Summary

Hold the SELECT button to show the Help Screen within a level. Controlling the game is simple. You simply move the analog stick to 'tilt' the levels and guide your various colored blobs around.

The game has camera controls for view rotate, zoom, and blob focus. You can use these to control whether the game is looking at the main blob close up, or stepping back to see all the blobs at once.

- Press the L and R buttons to Zoom in/out.
- Press the □ and ○ buttons to Rotate left/right.
- Press the △ and × buttons to move the camera up/down.
- Press the left/right directional buttons to Blob Focus.

Press the START button to pause the game and adjust various game, control and camera options.

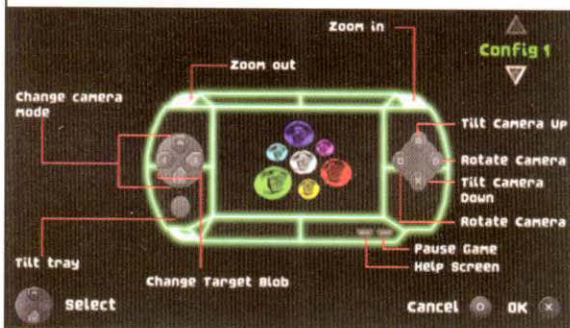
Press the HOME button to quit back to the PSP™ system's home menu. That's it — enjoy!



Default Game Controls

The control configuration screen is available by selecting Control Options from the Main Menu.

This screen summarizes each game control and which primary colors combine to form secondary colors. It is also possible to reconfigure some of the button controls by pressing the directional buttons up/down to show alternative control layouts. You must press the \times button to confirm the new layout.



TILT CONTROL

Throughout the game, you guide the Mercury around by simply tilting the tray with the analog stick. The more tilt you apply to the level, the faster the Mercury will flow. It's that simple.

HELP SCREEN

Press and hold the SELECT button to see the Help Screen during any level. The Help Screen will show you the color mix rules and give you a description of the objects you will encounter during the game.



The Game Camera

Generally speaking, the view on the screen follows your main blob as it moves about the level. You can zoom in and out and rotate around it.

There are times when the main blob will split into many separate smaller blobs, either because you need them to, or because they have become trapped. By default, the game camera will pull back to keep everything in view.

DEFAULT CAMERA ZOOM AND ROTATE

The \triangle , \circ , \times and \square buttons control the following options:

\square button / \circ button Rotate Camera Left / Right

\triangle button / \times button Raise / Lower the Camera view

R button / L button Camera Zoom In / Zoom Out

CAMERA MODES

The directional buttons control the camera mode and what the camera sees. The \triangle , \circ , \times and \square buttons change the tilt of the view.

The directional buttons up/down toggle between single-blob focus and multi-blob focus.

The directional buttons left/right toggle the camera focus between the separate blobs on the tray.

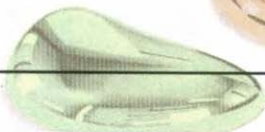


This icon momentarily appears on the screen when you have switched the camera to multi-blob focus. The camera zooms out to get all Mercury blobs in view and will automatically zoom in if the blobs merge or fall off of the edge.



This icon momentarily appears on the screen when you select the camera to look at, or focus, on one Mercury blob. You can jump between all blobs by pressing the directional buttons left/right. When looking at one blob, you can zoom in very close.

In single-blob focus mode, any unseen blobs on the level will be indicated by arrows pointing to them off screen.



Main Menu



NEW GAME

When you select NEW GAME, a new one player game will be started from scratch and any previous game progress, set-up data or scores held in memory that have not been saved will be lost.

The game flies you down into the main World HUB, around which are the 6 portals into the worlds beyond. Initially, only one portal is open — this is for the NEON World. Neon is a tutorial area in which you will learn how to select levels. Then you will be shown 12 simple levels. These levels will introduce you to basic concepts of tilting, color blending and splitting. You will also be introduced to interaction with common game objects such as Paint Shops to change your blob's color, moving floors, switch-activated gates and so on.

Initially, only the lowest levels of each type are accessible, with all others locked as shown by a red X. You can only access these by sequentially completing the lower levels.

Two Player Game

This option sets up a two player game using the WLAN connection. In this mode, two people play the same level in a competitive manner on two separate machines. Each player sees their opponent as a semi-transparent blob. This shows who is winning, losing or in a mess! During two player mode, the game's status display shows two sets of Mercury-remaining levels and two tasks completed, but only one shared countdown timer.

Please refer to the special Two Player section later in the manual for more information.

Load Game

Select the Load Game option to load a previously-saved game.

Options Menu

This is available from the Main Menu and also the in-game Pause Menu. From this menu, you can adjust the settings for Camera rotate (90 degrees, 45 degrees or free movement), and adjust the volume settings for sound effects, background music and Mercury sounds.

Game Structure

The World Hub Menu

Mercury contains 6 worlds of 12 levels each, making 72 levels in total. These worlds are arranged in difficulty order around the edge of the game's central control HUB.

You see the Hub as soon as you start a new game, but you return to the Hub by leaving a world's Level Select Screen, or after starting a brand new game. The Hub shows the 6 World Entry Portals. If the portal is open, you can enter the Level Select Screen shown through it. Each portal will only open if you have completed all 12 levels in the world before it. If you complete the 12th level in a world, the game shows a short video and guides you out to the World Hub, looking into the next world's open portal.

The World's names are: Neon [easy tutorial world], Quartz, Aqua, Xero, Helios, and Nano [the hardest].

The 1st World NEON - Tutorial Levels

When you start a new game, only the portal into Neon, the Tutorial world, is open. Neon levels are very simple. They introduce you to the basic aspects of gameplay, such as level tilting, color blending, color activated switches and gates. It also demonstrates moving floors and other elementary object interaction skills that you need to learn in order to survive. Many tutorial levels can be completed in seconds, whereas some higher world levels will take a lot longer.



Each time you start a level, the game flies you around the level to introduce you to its layout.

You can skip to the start by pressing the button. However, in tutorial levels, you will see instructions explaining the time limit and main goal.

Level Select Screen

The Level Select Screen shows a rising tier of 12 levels per world. These are split into 3 RACE, 3 PERCENTAGE and 3 TASH levels, then 2 Combo Levels and one Boss Level.



You start off at the bottom and unlock the higher levels by completing the lower ones. Locked levels are shown by a red X. Use the directional buttons to jump about. Start a level with the button. Pressing the button will quit back to the World Hub.

Completing the Boss Level involves solving all level objectives as well as battling a new game object or feature. The requirements will be tight. When you complete Boss Levels, the game plays an introductory video to the next world and places you back in the World Hub, facing the newly unlocked World Portal.



Race Levels

are primarily about how fast you can complete the level before time runs out. As the level begins, the maximum time is displayed and it always counts down. A warning sound will be heard 10 seconds before it reaches zero. On Race Levels, saving your entire blob is not as important as the time taken to get to the finish. Smaller blobs travel faster, however, you will lose points for losing some Mercury. The level will end if you run out of time, or if the Mercury level falls below the minimum.

Percentage Levels

require that you preserve as much of the Mercury blob as possible. Keep an eye on the Mercury level meter in the status display, as it will show the minimum required limit needed for level completion. If your level falls below the minimum, you will fail the level. The countdown timer is more generous than on timed Race Levels because blob preservation is the main aim.

Task Levels

have a number of beacons that need to be activated using colored switches and other devices. The further you progress, the more puzzling these levels will become.

Combo Levels

combine two main objectives. Race and Percentage or Percentage and Task, and are designed to test skills from earlier levels.

Boss Levels

combine all three objectives. Completing a Boss Level will unlock the next world.

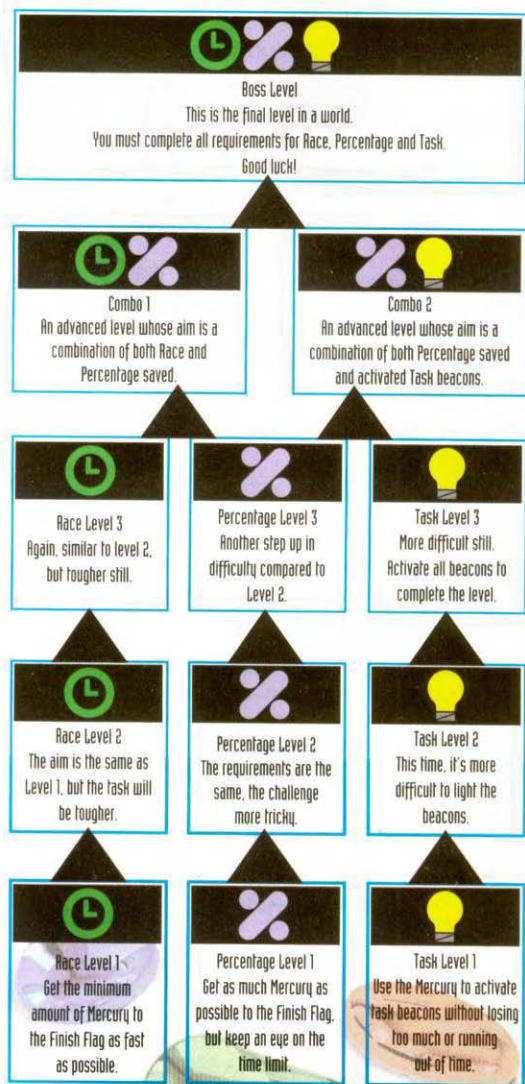
As you progress through the game, all the times get tighter, the minimum Mercury levels increase and the number of tasks goes up. If you can complete World 6 Boss, you are probably from another planet.

Basic Target for All Levels

The aim is to get as much Mercury across the level in the shortest time possible. Some levels end with a single colored switch. In this case, you have to maneuver one tiny blob of Mercury onto the switch in order to light up the end beacon. In addition, the Mercury has to be the same color as the switch. Other levels have pressure switches that can only be activated when you get a certain amount of Mercury onto the switch. Keep the Mercury on the switch while the counter goes up until the attached beacon activates. If your main blob is not big enough to fully activate the pressure switch, then the count up bars will stop before they reach the end. Some levels have multiple task beacons. These can be completed in any order. The level is finished when all are lit up.



Summary of Level Select Structure



The Score System

You are awarded a score only when you successfully complete a level.

Each of the 72 levels has its own hi-score table. The scores attained are unique to that level and are not comparable to other smaller or larger levels. There are plenty of ways to maximize your scores.

All 72 hi-score tables are updated whenever you save your game, so you can build up and improve your whole score history with time.

At the start of a new game, the initial top four hi-score entries are set to values achieved by players during Mercury testing, so to get the top spot you'll have to be pretty good!

This numerical score is based on the three key level-type objectives -- time remaining (to the nearest 1/100th of a second), the amount of Mercury left (to the nearest percent), and how many tasks you completed (between 1 and 6 task beacons lit). There is also a bonus multiplier depending on the level and world numbers.

The time part of the score awards you 100 points for each second remaining, so if the time remaining was 10.9 seconds, then the score will be 1,090 points.

The percentage part of the score is 25 points per percent of Mercury left on the level at completion. This gives a maximum of 2,500 points.

The task part of the score gives you 500 points per activated task beacon, including the level end beacon. Most levels have one beacon, but some of the more complicated ones have up to 6 beacons, so it's possible to get 3,000 points.

The bonus multiplier only applies to the level type component part of the score. On Combo or Boss Levels, this multiplier can be applied to two or more of the component parts because they are levels where you have to concentrate on two or more objectives such as Time and Percentage. So, a Time and Percent Combo Level in World 4 completed with 18 seconds to spare and with 60% Mercury remaining and 1 task complete would earn $(18 \times 100) \times 4 + (60 \times 25) \times 4 + 500 = 13,700$ points.

Tip:

Have you gotten a top 5 finish in the hi-score list but can't seem to get close to getting in the top spot? Have you completed all level tasks and finished without losing any Mercury, but there always seem to be a couple of scores better than yours? Look for shortcuts!

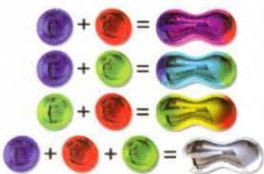


Color Mixing Rules

For the purposes of the game, Mercury appears as silver when it's made up of any mixture of the three primary colors--Red, Blue, and Green.

Any combination of Red, Blue, and Green Mercury will form a silver blob, regardless of the quantities involved.

When different colored blobs are mixed, the original colors are lost and the blob becomes the new color throughout. The image below explains this.



Primary Color

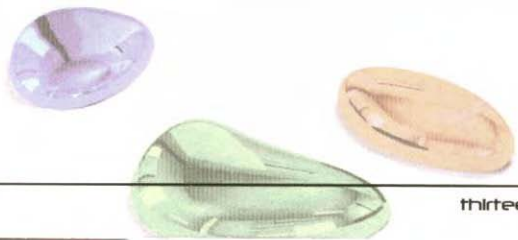
- Blue + Red
- Blue + Green
- Green + Red
- Blue + Red + Green

Secondary Color

- Magenta
- Cyan
- Yellow
- Silver

Color Mixing Examples

- If a small Red blob is mixed with a large Green blob, the resulting blob will be pure Yellow and the size will be equal to the two blobs in total.
- If a small Magenta blob (made up of Blue + Red) is mixed with a large Green blob, the resulting blob will be Silver.



Playing a One Player Game

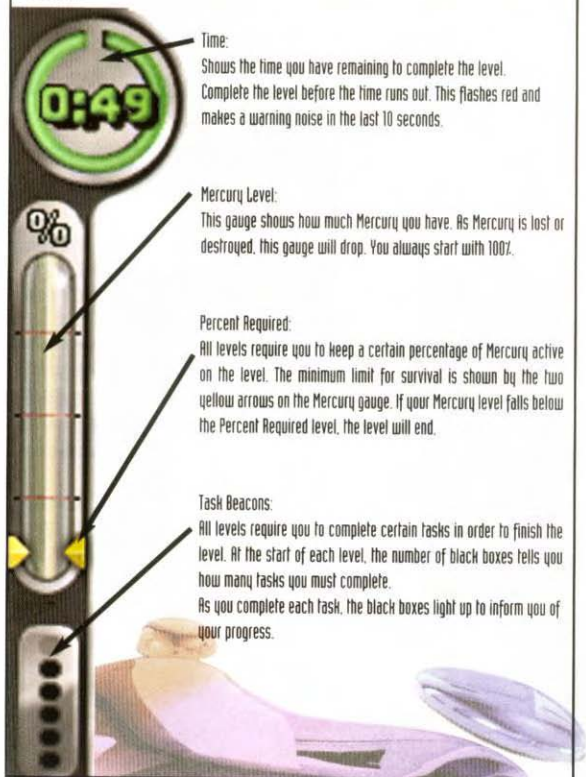
At the start of each level, you will have a quantity of Mercury on a tray. By simply tilting the tray using the analog stick left, right, up or down, the Mercury will flow around.

To complicate matters, various objects are positioned on the trays to help or hinder your progress. In some cases, they can do both.

These objects may have a different visual appearance in each world, but their functionality is the same throughout the game.

In-Game Status Window (One Player)

During a level, all the information you need is presented to you by this status area on the left of the screen.



Pausing the Game During a Level

Press the START button during a level to bring up the Pause Menu. The Pause Menu allows you to catch your breath from the liquid mayhem, and also gives you access to a number of game options:



- Resume level after a break
- Restart the level from the beginning, showing the level intro and task details again
- Camera options
- Change audio volumes
- Quit current level and return to the Level Select Screen

Level Finished Menu

When you successfully complete a level, the Finished Menu will appear. From this menu, you have the following choices:



- Play the next level
- Retry the level
- Return to Level Select
- Save the game

Failing a Level

If you fail a level, you will be given the option to:



- Retry the level
- Return to the Level Select Screen to select another level

Saving a Game

If you wish to save your current game status and all of your current scores, select this option and follow the on screen information. The game will only save the locked/unlocked status of completed levels and will not save the partial progress through individual levels.



Playing a Two Player Game

The object of a two player game is simple - finish the level before your opponent and before time runs out!

If one player fails or loses too much Mercury over the side, then the other player automatically wins!



You both play the exact same level, starting at the same time with the same initial time / percentage / task limits as shown on the two player status display below.

Your opponent's Mercury is indicated on your screen by a ghost blob with an arrow above it, which shows you the color, size and position of your adversary. This becomes very useful when your opponent has split up into many smaller blobs. Also, you can use the ghost blob to see if your opponent has sacrificed half their original blob to get a little extra speed.

Either player can concede a game, or if both players decide to concede at once, the game will be a draw.

Win, lose or draw, the client must wait while the host decides whether to play another level, or to restart the current one.

In-Game Status Window During Two Player Games

The Status Window used in two player games is slightly different than the version used in one player mode. You are both sharing the same level and time limit, as well as the Percentage and Task requirements.

However, there are now two sets of indicators side by side so that both players can quickly see who's got the most Mercury left and how many tasks have been completed. You can use this to work out their strategy.

This bar indicates the amount of Mercury you have left, with tasks completed indicated below (left side).

This bar indicates the amount of Mercury your opponent has left, with tasks completed indicated below (right side).

Because both players are on the same level, the yellow arrows for minimum target percentage will always be the same.

The task beacon total will be the same for both players.



Setting Up a Two Player Game

- Please ensure the WLAN switch on the PSP system is set to ON, otherwise you will not be able to start or join a two player game.
- Note on network performance: If the client notices a break or jittery movement in the menus or during two player play, this is most likely due to network performance degradation. Under these circumstances, please move the PSP systems closer together and remove any obstructions between them.

Notes About Two Player Games

- The Pause Menu is not available during the level introductory fly-by and Network Synchronization.
- If either player notices a break in movement of the other player's ghost blob, this is indicative of the network performance degradation. Under these circumstances, please position the PSP systems closer together and remove any obstructions between them.
- Choosing QUIT during the game will DISCONNECT both players from the two player game and return both to the Start Menu.

Hosting a Two Player Game

The first thing to do before you start a multiplayer game is enter the name you wish to use. Press the directional buttons left/right to select the character to change, then press the directional buttons up/down to change it.



A player can choose to Start a Network Game (host), or Join a Network Game (client).

The player who starts a game waits for someone to join that game. If the host chooses to decline the client that attempts to join, the host is returned to a "waiting for player to join" state and the client is returned to the list of started games.



Once the host accepts a client, both PSP systems are connected to each other. If this process fails, please move the PSP systems closer together.



The host will then choose which world and level to play. Both players get a display showing the current score. Your score is shown on the left in white and your opponent's score is shown on the right in red.



When the host chooses a level, the level will load and play will commence.



NOTE: The levels available in a two player game are those available in the host's single player game, so you may wish to load a game first in order to have more levels available to play.

Joining a Two Player Game

The first thing to do before you start a multiplayer game is enter the name you wish to use. Press the directional buttons left/right to select the character to change, then press the directional buttons up/down to change it.



If you join a multiplayer game, Mercury will search for available games and present you with a list, indicating the host's name and the completion percentage of their Mercury game. The completion percentage is a good indication of how many available levels the host will have.



You then choose which game you wish to join and press the \times button to confirm. You must then wait for the host to either accept or decline the request.



If the host accepts the request to join, you must wait for the host to select the level to be played. The two player game will then begin.



If the host chooses to decline the client, the host is returned to a 'waiting for player to join' state and the client is returned to the list of started games.

Level Objects and Elements



Colored Switch

Activate the colored switch by moving Mercury of the same color onto it. The switch will be connected by flux lines to a nearby gate or other device, which will then activate. These switches can be a variety of colors, including plain silver.



Beacon

Lights up when a task is successfully completed. They are clearly visible because they stand above the surrounding level details. They are activated by colored switches or pressure switches connected to them by flux lines.



Pressure Switch

These only activate when you move a certain amount of Mercury onto them. This causes the chevrons to light up sequentially. If you do not have enough Mercury on the switch, the lights will stop short of the end. You also have to keep the blob on the switch until all chevrons have illuminated.



Paint Shop

Change the color of your Mercury to that displayed by the Paint Shop by passing through.



Flux Lines

These power lines connect switches and other elements together so you can work out what is controlling what. They animate at different speeds depending on whether they are active or not.



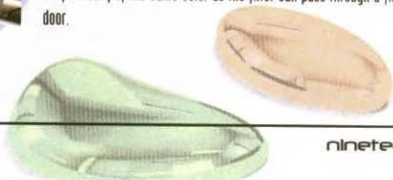
Flux Transmitter

These devices come in pairs and are used to activate distant objects that are too far away to be linked with a normal flux line. When they activate, they rotate and fire a beam of energy at the receiving unit to activate a nearby element. You must watch where they point in case the receiving unit is out of sight.



Filter Door

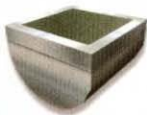
Only Mercury of the same color as the filter can pass through a filter door.





Door

Allows access to new areas of the tray, but these open and close depending on nearby switches or are timed to open and shut at regular intervals. Some doors slide open or shut depending on the tilt of the level itself.



Platform

These move at different rates between two unconnected parts of the level and can be used to transport Mercury around.



Pile Driver

Pile Drivers strike downward at regular intervals. If you get caught in one, it will scatter your blob all over the nearby area or even off the tray itself. Be very careful getting past this device.



Pusher

They might be slow, but they are as destructive as the pile driver. They can push your Mercury right over the edge or into oncoming Mercoids.



Stan

This simple character rolls around in a preset manner, stopping to change direction when encountering any obstacles, including Mercury. Stan will always turn to the right when his path is blocked. Therefore, you can persuade him to roll onto switches and other devices where you might not want to take your Mercury.



Spinner

There are a variety of spinners that either move in fixed angular steps or rotate about their center, depending on how you push them around.



Gear

Similar in nature to the spinners, with the exception that they can only rotate 90 degrees at a time and usually need to be activated by nearby switches or flux transmitters.



Grav Bender

This device lies dormant until you get near it. When triggered, it shimmers into view and drags nearby Mercury blobs upwards by inverting the local gravity field. You can use them to fling Mercury across gaps in the tray or over walls, but if you stay in the middle of them they can stick your Mercury to the underside of platforms. When this happens, the tilt controls are also inverted, not just the gravity.



Jacob's Ladder

These are high energy devices charged with millions of volts of electricity. Get too close to them and you will have chunks of your blob vaporized until there's nothing left. It's quite a shocking device, but there are ways around them once you know their behavior.



Mercoïd

This nasty little character actually likes eating Mercury. If you stray too close to a Mercoïd, you risk having a piece chewed off.



Tilt Bridge

This bridge can be used to reach inaccessible areas of the tray. They are lowered by dropping some Mercury onto the small lower scoop. Sometimes, you will need to recover the Mercury used to drop the bridge, as it may be required later.



Elevator

Used to transport Mercury to different floors of the tray. May be activated by a switch.



Teleporter

Move your Mercury underneath one of these and it will gradually teleport to another area of the level that might be unreachable by normal means. Some Teleports may be One Way only. Make sure you're going to the correct place before you decide to try it out.



Vacuum Pipe

Vacuum pipes are sometimes fixed and sometimes move around in big circles. If you get too close to the entrance funnel, you will be gradually sucked up, moved along a vacuum tube and spat out the other end. These devices can be useful, or treated as a hazard! You'll have to work that out when you get there.



Mercury Credits

Concept and Direction

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Morris Butler

Ade Smith

Research and Development

Jeb Mayers

Mark Webster

Production

Rob Palfreman (Producer)

Graeme Monk

Programming Team

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Ed Bradley (Head Coder)

Ade Smith

Fred O'Rourke

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Mark Webster

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Jeb Mayers

Ade Smith

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Mercury Credits

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Nick and Sarah
Rod and Helen
PJ and Helseq
The Flying Baguette
Otto, for, well, being cute n fluffu

Female Support Crew

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Liz
Magali
Wendy
Justine
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Matilda
Sue
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