



Shareware Snapshots

A look at some interesting DOS-based games and a utility that helps you manage memory effectively

Shroom 2.2d

While running a program or an application when you have to use another app, you shell out to DOS—only to realize that the available memory is insufficient to run the second application. That's when Shroom can come to your rescue.

Shroom (Shell Room) is a utility that gives DOS applications' shells more memory space by forcing a program to release all the memory (well almost all!) when it shells out to DOS. The program itself needs just 6 kB of RAM. It works by intercepting the shell operations and swapping the application program to disk—leaving only the swap information in RAM. And it's intelligent enough to prompt the user of a disk full status when it is unable to perform a swap. It even provides a way to work around the DOS command line limitation of 128 bytes.

On a 386DX with 4 MB RAM (617 kB largest program size) I could get 607 kB available space (as opposed to the normal 461 kB) with Lotus 3.2. Similar was the case with FoxPro 2.5. This utility, however, imposes one limitation—normally, when you shell out to DOS from a program, background processing continues. However, when you do the same from Shroom, the background activity of the shelled program is halted.

Alok Sinha

SHROOM 2.2D

SUMMARY: A useful program that lets you load other large apps without terminating your current program. Ideal for users who need to do pseudo multitasking.

DEVELOPER: Davis Augustine (Shroom Shareware), PO Box 610, Sausalito, CA 94966-0610.

PRICE: Registration \$25 for single users, \$95 for groups (up to 12 users)

AVAILABLE FROM: PCQ Online (011-6451734)

Cosmo

The first episode of The Forbidden Planet starts off when a comet crashes into Cosmo's spaceship—forcing his dad to land the spaceship on an uncharted planet. While Cosmo's dad is repairing the ship, Cosmo goes off to explore the planet. He returns to find his parents missing—and some mysterious footprints around the spaceship.

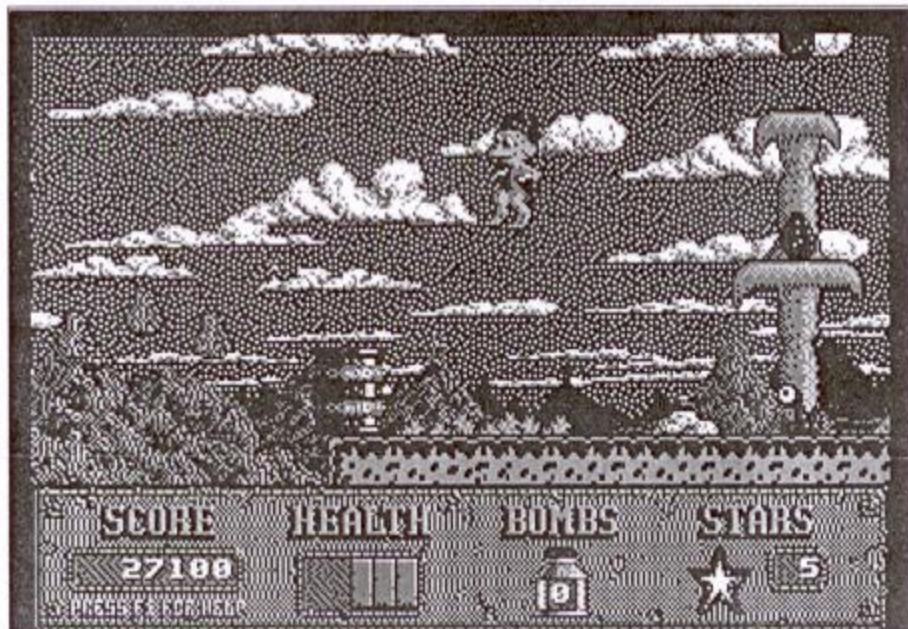
Cosmo must now find his parents—and battle the hostile inhabitants of the planet who hold them hostage. He can destroy his enemies by jumping on them. In addition, Cosmo carries bombs and can climb walls by clinging to them.

This game has one major problem—it takes about 2 MB of disk space and needs 528 kB of free RAM to run. Like all Apogee games, it supports keyboard redefinition and joysticks. You can also have audio effects as it supports the Adlib sound card. If you register with Apogee you get a hints sheet, the cheat codes, and a new bonus game.

Siddhant Bhansali

COSMO

SUMMARY: An interesting game which becomes tougher in the later stages. The graphics and ani-



Cosmo can destroy enemies by jumping on them; he also carries bombs and can climb walls.

mation are relatively unsophisticated. Unlike Crystal Caves, you have no option of different selecting levels.

DEVELOPER: Apogee Software, PO Box 476386, Garland, Texas 75043 USA

PRICE: Registration \$39 (for all three episodes).

AVAILABLE FROM: PCQ Online (011-6451734)

Crystal Caves

Mylo Steamwitz is a human space trader looking for a get-rich-quick scheme. His latest brainwave is to fly into the Altaivan Star System to collect crystals and buy Twibbles. Twibbles are a species of pets which happen to be the current craze in the galaxy.

Mylo must avoid contact with aliens while collecting crystals, because he has only three energy bars. Whenever he comes in contact with the enemy he loses one bar. And when all the bars are exhausted, Mylo dies. But his dying does not exit you out of the game, all you have



Some of the horrors that Mylo has to battle with are egg-dropping aliens and roaming snakes.

to do is start that stage all over again. Among the horrors Mylo has to battle are levels without lights, egg-dropping aliens, and roaming snakes. For protection, Mylo has a laser pistol—but some creatures require multiple shots. And all along you must remember that some levels have such a low gravity that the recoil from the laser pistol can knock Mylo into other dangers.

New users may find the game controls a bit unusual, but you can easily

redefine them. Joystick support is available. Registering the game with Apogee will get you the hints sheet, the cheat codes, and a new bonus game.

Siddhant Bhansali

CRYSTAL CAVES

SUMMARY: Very simple game with cute animation and an unusual story. Requires an EGA/VGA and 371 kB of disk space. You can also select any level to play.

PRICE: Registration \$33 for three episodes.

DEVELOPER: Apogee Software, PO Box 476386, Garland, Texas 75043, USA.

AVAILABLE FROM: PCQ Online (011-6451734).

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