

Virgin Games presents **Strangeloop**, one of a new generation of software products. As a massive arcade adventure **Strangeloop**, we believe, presents one of the most challenging games yet to be seen on the market. The game is designed not only to give hours of entertainment but days and weeks as well. To make life easy it comes with a **Game Save** facility so that you may go back to playing it at the exact point you left off. Your mission is to regain control of a **robot factory**, situated at the edge of a distant solar system. **Robots** automatically manufactured here carry out all the work and drudgery of every day life on **Earth** – that is, up until now! The factory has been **invaded** by powerful alien forces re-programming the robots to **destroy Earth**. Your sole mission is to regain control of the factory. No maps of it exist, indeed it is one hundred years since man last set foot in it. All you know is the environment is **desperately hostile**, suited only to **indestructible robots**, soaring temperatures, no oxygen, zero gravity and razor sharp industrial waste. **240 rooms** lie between you and the **Control Centre**, many of these rooms have been designed to be **impenetrable** and now for the first time you alone must try and break these defences on your **heroic mission to save the human race**.

All you have is your 10th generation space-suit and your laser gun to keep you alive, as you stumble ever onwards seeking the **Control Room**. You begin to wonder why you ever accepted this mission ... quit, and **Earth is doomed**, continue, and ...

The screen shows:

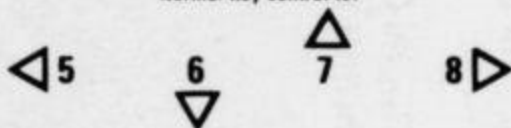
- which room you are in (large picture),
- the layout of rooms around you, including entrances and exits (5x5 grid),
- your **SUIT STATUS** i.e. how many leaks your suit has,
- your **PATCHES STATUS** i.e. how many patches you are carrying to mend your suit,
- your **CHARGE STATUS** i.e. how many laser charges you have,
- your **POCKET STATUS** i.e. which objects you are carrying,
 - your fuel status,
 - your oxygen status,
 - lives' left,
 - Control Room compass.

STARTING THE GAME

To load, type LOAD"" and press ENTER

CONTROLS

Normal key control is:



Fire horizontally = 1

Fire diagonally = 0

If, however, you find that these controls are uncomfortable to use, you may re-define these 6 control keys (follow the on-screen instructions).

GAME PLAYING

YOUR SPACESUIT - OXYGEN, LEAKS, PATCHES

Because there is no oxygen on this planet you depend upon your oxygen supply for your life support. Unfortunately though the flying swarf in the factory is razor-sharp and will puncture your suit if you come into contact with it. The number of leaks you sustain will determine the amount of oxygen you are losing through your space suit. You can, however, repair your suit by picking up the patches that lie around the factory and top up your oxygen supply with the oxygen capsules you will find.

A tip to note is that you can only carry a maximum of 99 patches, thus if you have no leaks and are carrying 99 patches do not pick up another one as you will merely destroy it.

LASER STATUS

You may carry up to a maximum of 99 laser charges, these can be used to clear a way through most(!) of the swarf and aliens, but be careful as there is only a limited amount of ammunition which has been left in the factory.

OBJECTS/POCKETS

To pick an object up simply walk into it. As you pick up an object a graphic representation of it will appear in the 'pocket' sector on the screen.

USING AN OBJECT

In order to use an object, move the cursor (a purple square in the top right hand corner of the pockets) over the desired object by using the caps shift button and your movement direction keys. The objects name will appear just above the representation of the object.

To use an object that you are carrying, press the caps shift key and the fire-diagonally key together. At times you may wish to give an object you are carrying to one of the robots or aliens you might meet. To do this you must move over the character you wish to give the object to and then use the object in the normal way.

JET CYCLE

Abandoned in the factory is an old jet cycle. This will help you enormously in your travels. It is however rather thirsty on fuel so you will need to keep your eye on the fuel gauge and keep picking up the fuel pods which have been left lying around.

Note:— to collect the jet cycle will require a degree of thought and at times you will need to exit the jet cycle!

LIVES

You start the game with 8 lives, each time you lose a life a teleporter will appear on the screen. This can be moved around by using your 4 movement keys. Just move the teleporter to the position on the screen where you wish to start your next life, then press "space" to start again.

CONTROL ROOM COMPASS



This will always point in the direction of the control room to give you a bearing wherever you are in the factory.

FIRING

Be careful not to shoot useful objects! Also if you kill **ALL** the swarf in one room then they will not reappear in that room.

GRID LOCATOR

This 5x5 room plan shows the rooms surrounding the one you are in. This will help you to plan your route. You are always shown as the central cyan square. Red squares indicate that Megaswarf is present in that room! A square with a jet cycle in it indicates that the jet cycle has been left or is waiting to be picked up in that room. A yellow square indicates your final destination – the Control Room.

SAVE GAME

This game is mammoth and thus to add to your enjoyment of it there is a save-game facility. This will save on tape all the relevant information about where you are, what you are carrying and what you have done, and how long you have been exploring the factory.

At a later date you can load this information back from tape to resume where you left off. To enter the save/load facility press the Space Key. An example of how to use this is shown below.

1. Normal game play.
2. To save game, insert **BLANK** tape into your cassette player, connect a lead from the **MIC** socket on the Spectrum to the **MIC** socket on your cassette player.

Press Space Key to interrupt game.

Press **PLAY & RECORD** on cassette player, wait for a few seconds - for the blank leader tape to pass the recording head.

Press key "**S**" - this will output the information to the tape.

3. To restart the game at a later date, load in the main game tape in the normal way.

Press Space to enter save/load modes.

Press "**L**" to load in the information.

Insert the tape into the cassette player with the saved information on it, ensuring that it is fully rewound, then press **PLAY**. This will load the information into your Spectrum.

PAUSE

To pause the game, i.e. to make a cup of coffee in the early hours!, simply enter the save/load routine by pressing the Space key. To return to the game press any one of your movement control keys.

AUTHOR PROFILE

Charles Goodwin is 28 years old and lives in North London. Ten years ago Charles was introduced to programming on larger computers and indeed currently earns his living working with large computer systems. In the last few years he has extended his skill to micro computers and games.

In his leisure time, he devotes most of his energies into his lifelong love of drawing and painting. Charles used to enjoy playing Dungeons and Dragons and both reading and writing Science Fiction, but writing computer games seems to have left no time for that!