

GAMES

ELIZA

WHO ?

TRANS-TEX SOFTWARE

WHAT ?

VIRTUAL THERAPIST

WHERE ?

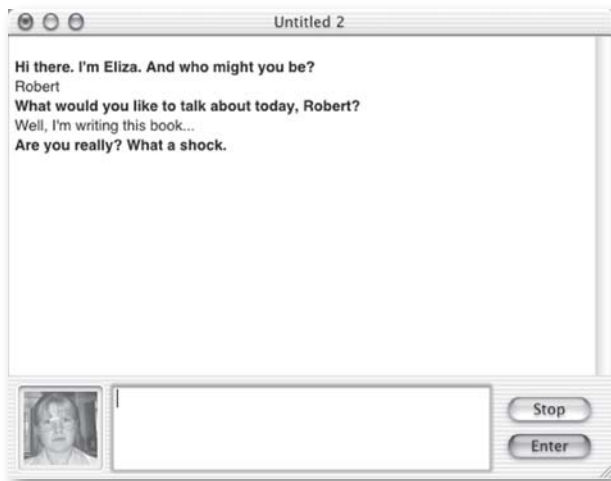
WWW.NEARSIDE.COM/TRANS-TEX/

HOW MUCH ?

\$15.00

WHAT ELSE ?

Eliza is a virtual therapist for your Mac, an understanding listener in your computer that's always a mouse click away. This version for OS X is an update to an old classic. Originally created by Joseph Weizenbaum at MIT in 1966, Eliza was designed to simulate a non-judgmental therapist, an empathetic and supportive listener. There have been countless variations of Eliza since the original version.



To start your session, launch Eliza and press the Start button in the document window. Eliza appears in a window and greets you (the program will take advantage of your Mac's speech synthesis capabilities if you have speech enabled). What makes this version of Eliza so much fun is the animated picture of "Eliza,"

a professional-looking woman who could easily pass for a real therapist. When she talks, her lips move almost in sync with her words, and she tilts her head and smiles as she waits for your reply. When your session is over, you can save it to a text file. She'll even remember recent sessions with you.

Compared to other versions of Eliza that I've seen, this one is impressive. See for yourself: OS X comes with its own version, accessed in Terminal. Type **emacs** after Terminal opens, then hold down the Shift and ESC keys, and hit **x**. Now type **doctor**. To quit, press Control-x then Control-c. After you've tried the Trans-Text Software version of Eliza, you won't want to bother with Terminal again.

SO WHAT ?

Eliza is a modern update to an old classic. Animation, speech synthesis, and an improved "response engine," make it an engaging and entertaining diversion. But remember, it's just a game.

LINES

WHO ?

BRAKES OFF

WHAT ?

BOARD GAME

WHERE ?

HOMEPAGE.MAC.COM/COSTIQUE/SW/INDEX.HTML

HOW MUCH ?

FREE

WHAT ELSE ?

Lines is a colorful (and addicting) single-player board game. You play by moving candy-colored balls on a grid. You can move one ball with each turn, and each time you move a ball, three more balls of random colors are added to the board. The goal is to arrange five or more balls in a line (horizontally, vertically, or diagonally), which clears them from the board. You score a point for each ball removed.

The concept is simple, but more balls are added to the board with every move, making play increasingly difficult. Balls will find a path through the board—they don't have to move in a straight line—but they can't jump over pieces. You can adjust the difficulty by changing the board size (anywhere from a 7 x 7 to a 15 x 15 grid), and the number of colors used (from five to nine). You can also choose whether to preview the next three balls to be added to the board.

There are several options that don't affect the play, but add to the fun. The sound effects are worth a chuckle, but turn them off if they're too distracting. You can animate the movement of the balls (Flowing Liquid, Walking Drop, Slide Show, or Railroad—take your pick) and the flashing effect when you select a ball to move. I like the Pulsing effect, but Throbbing is nice, too.

SO WHAT ?

Colorful design, animation, sound effects, and addictive game play make Lines a great productivity killer.

MACIAGO

WHO ?

MIGUEL MARCOS

WHAT ?

BOARD GAME

WHERE ?

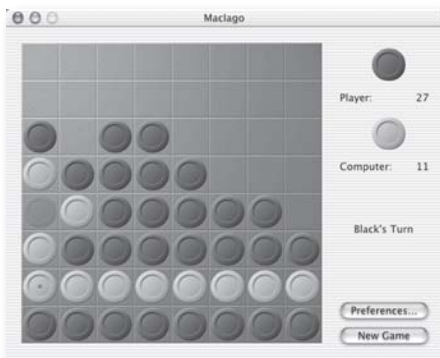
www.rodedia.org/maciago/

HOW MUCH ?

FREE

WHAT ELSE ?

Maclago is a board game, similar to Othello or Reversi. The purpose of the game is to enclose your opponent's pieces (on any side), which replaces their pieces with your own. You must be able to convert a piece, or you forfeit your move. The game is over when no player can move, and the player with the most pieces on the board wins the game.



You can play against the computer or another person. A slider adjusts the game from Easy to Hard, and there's an option to show possible moves on the board (they appear as ghosted pieces). Minimal, but fitting, sound effects put the finishing touches on a simple, but polished interface.

SO WHAT ?

Othello is a serious game (try doing a search on Google and you'll come up with thousands of listings), and Maclago is a fine implementation for OS X.

MIKE'S CARDS

WHO ?

MIKE SEDORE

WHAT ?

CARD GAMES

WHERE ?

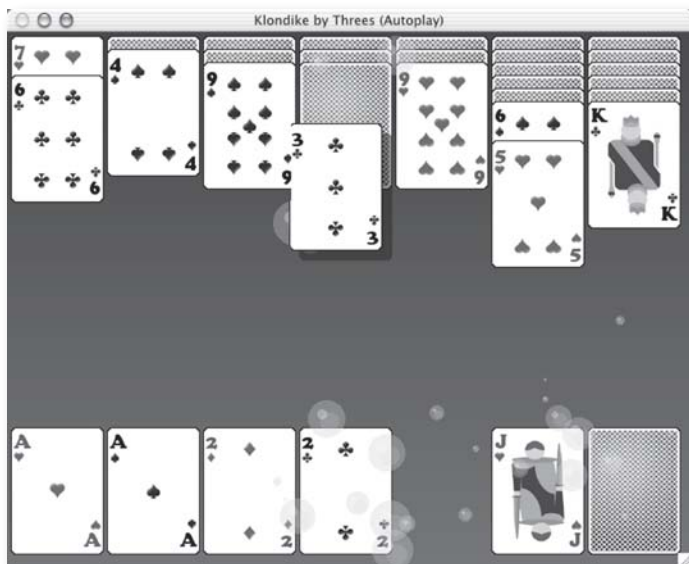
WWW.MIKESEDORE.COM

HOW MUCH ?

FREE, \$25 FOR THE SHAREWARE VERSION

WHAT ELSE ?

Mike's Cards comes in two flavors: The Lite version is free and includes seven popular card games (Arcade Poker, Forty Thieves, Go Fish, Klondike, La Belle Lucie, Spider, and The Towers), while the "heavy" version includes 150 games.



The Lite version is pretty spiffy, but the full version of Mike's Cards must be the ultimate card game collection. Everything's here, from casino games (like Arcade Poker and Blackjack, and five variations of Poker), to classics like Crazy Eights and

Old Maid, plus three kids games, 72 one-pack games, and 66 two-pack games. And it isn't just quantity that makes Mike's Cards special. The program is also well-designed, and offers several options to make the experience more personal and more fun. For example, when you move the cards, you get a trail effect. The default is Bubbles (a little too Lawrence Welk for my taste), but you can also choose from Ghosts, Lighting, Sparkles or Stars (or none, if you prefer). You can also select a background image or texture (Burl Elm is nice), change the pattern on the backs of the cards (including a movie), change the font on the cards to any installed font, and adjust the sound effects.

You can display a window that shows the rules for the selected game (you'll need it, with so many games to choose from), and Mike will also keep track of your statistics for you, including your score, and games won and lost.

SO WHAT ?

Mike's Cards is the ultimate card game collection. With an overwhelming selection of games and great graphics, playing cards has never been so much fun.

MYPONG

WHO ?

MATH GAME HOUSE

WHAT ?

PING PONG GAME

WHERE ?

HOMEPAGE.MAC.COM/MATHGAMEHOUSE/PONG.HTML

HOW MUCH ?

\$5.00

WHAT ELSE ?

myPong is the Cocoa update of an old favorite. Going far beyond the original Pong, myPong includes color graphics, a paddle that's controlled by the mouse (you can move it forward and back) and adjusted by the keyboard (you can change the orientation, even spin the paddle around). There's also a Funky play mode. In Funky mode, various critters crawl across the screen; hit one and you lose the point.

myPong makes for some pretty challenging play. An adjustable slider lets you control the speed of the ball, from painful slow motion to a breathlessly fast pace. Hit the Panic Button (the "O" in Pong) if your boss is hovering around. It makes the game almost transparent and turns off the sound. You can still play in semi-transparent mode, which gives the game an eerie ghost-like quality.

There are few available options: single or double player (using the keyboard), the color of the paddle (you can put Mac and Windows logos on the paddles and have a showdown), and Funky mode. Watch out! Play around with the options too much and you'll find yourself playing against Bill G.

SO WHAT ?

If you feel a fit of nostalgia (if Pong is nostalgic for you that is), myPong is a fun way to bring back your college—or high school, or whatever—days.