

COUNTDOWN is a version of the successful TV words and numbers game adapted for popular home computers. The game includes an in-built dictionary containing thousands of words and may be played as a one or two player game.

LOADING

Spectrum: Type LOAD "" and press ENTER. (LOAD is obtained by pressing the "J" key). Start the tape. When the program loads remember to stop the tape immediately.

CBM 64: Hold down the SHIFT key and press RUN/STOP. Start the tape.

Amstrad: Hold down the CTRL key and press the small ENTER key. Press PLAY on tape deck and press any key on the computer.

BBC: Type CHAIN "" (or CH."") and press RETURN. Start the tape.

On loading the title screen is displayed. Press any key to continue.

Both players are prompted for their names, which are entered on the keyboard, followed by ENTER/RETURN (for a one-player game, press ENTER/RETURN when asked for Player 2's name. You must score as many points as you can, and try to beat the computer's best words and calculations).

THE GAME

The game consists of 9 separate rounds of Number and Word (Anagram) games. The aim of the game is to score as many points as you can.

Any mistakes made can be altered with the DELETE key.

Before starting, someone must be the Dictionary Master (so arm yourself with a Dictionary) because in the Anagram section if the computer cannot find a particular word, the players will be asked if they are sure that the word is valid. The Dictionary Master will have to decide. You will need some paper and pens.

Remember that you have a time limit when entering your answers, so be quick!

The 1st Round is an *Anagram* Game – Player 1 selects 9 Vowels or Consonants (by pressing the 'V' or 'C' keys at the bottom of the keyboard). Once all 9 letters have been chosen, the Players have a 30 second Countdown, during which they attempt to make up the longest word that they can from their selection of nine letters.

When the Countdown has ended, both players are prompted to enter their words on the keyboard, followed by ENTER/RETURN. The words are checked against the computer's own dictionary. If the computer cannot find a particular word, they will be asked to consult the Dictionary Master who will be asked to press 'Y' for a valid word and 'N' if it is incorrect. The player with the longer valid word gets 1 point for each letter in his word.

At the end of the round, the computer will display the best word that it could obtain.

Rounds 2 and 3 are the same as Round 1, except that Players take it in alternate turns to choose the letters.

The 4th Round is a *Numbers* game. Here, Player 2 chooses six numbers from four rows. The 1st row contains 4 large numbers (all between 25 and 100), and the other rows have small numbers, all less than 10. When choosing how many numbers to

take, the player uses the number keys at the top of the keyboard, followed by ENTER/RETURN (the computer shows how many numbers are allowed, in brackets after the 'How many do you want from row ...' prompt, at the bottom of the screen.

Once the six numbers have been chosen, they are displayed in six boxes at the top of the screen. You will then be asked to 'Press any key to spin CECIL'. Cecil will choose a random number, and you will then have 30 seconds to get this number by adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing. You *do not* have to use all the numbers.

At time up, both players will be prompted to enter the figures that they managed to get, by using the number keys followed by ENTER/RETURN.

The players will then have to enter their calculations, one operation at a time as follows:

"number operator number = result" eg, "10+2=12" ENTER/RETURN until they reach their target number (displayed in the bottom right hand corner of the screen).


The computer will only accept calculations in this format and will not allow invalid calculations – ie, operations where the result will be negative, greater than 999 or a fraction. If you do not reach your target number, your attempt will be disqualified.

The player whose result is closer to CECIL's target number gets 7 points. If neither player can get close, Cecil displays how the calculation should be done, line by line.

After the Numbers Round, there are three more Anagram Rounds, with players again taking turns to choose vowel or consonant. The next round is another Numbers Round, followed by the Countdown Conundrum.

In this FINAL round, both players have 30-seconds to unravel a nine letter anagram. The first player to spot the word gets 10 points. Player 1 presses the 'A' key to stop the clock, and Player 2 presses the 'L' key. If you stop the clock, you must immediately type in what you think the anagram is. If you are wrong, then the other player has the rest of the countdown to try and work it out – so be careful!

At the end of the game, the final scores are displayed along with the winner's name. Press 'Y' to play again, or 'N' to stop the program.



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