

FAQ

For Nintendo NES
Version Final
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Author's Note

One of the most consuming puzzle game crazes to ever grace the Earth was Tetris, and its infamous Russian origin. Eventually created back in the late 1980s, Tetris flew across the world like a wide-spread malaria. Video game players were absolutely blown away by the fast paced puzzle game which required you to react to what pieces you received, then place them to form uniform lines. The progressive speed always caught the players from behind, and eventually led to their downfall. This FAQ will outline the basic rules of Tetris, along with any additional strategies and/or unlockable bonuses. Connect the pieces for your own survival!

Contributing/Feedback

If you have any contributions, feedback, or strategies you'd like to have added to the guide, contact me via e-mail or on GameFAQs. I'll be more than content to add your segment of information, and will also provide credit. If you have any questions you'd like added to the Common Questions section, ask. I simply don't have the time to sit around thinking of questions. Provide me with what you want to know!

Updates
=03/10/11= vFinal
Final update.
=12/31/05= v Final
Final update for this guide.
$=02 / 28 / 04=v 1.0$
Finished the FAQ. Not my best work ever, but it's 100\% complete, and ready to assist any Tetris players.
$=02 / 27 / 04=v 1.0$
Started the FAQ. Not really going to be overwhelmingly in-depth, although I will toss a few general tips and strategies here and there. Tetris really comes down to reaction speed. Expecting this to be done within 1-2 days.


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- 1) Introduction
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Many people wonder why and how Tetris became one of the greatest puzzle games ever. It's simple - originality. Never before have we seen a game where random pieces are spurt out, and the intelligence of the player is forced into play. Tetris is basically about forming straight horizontal lines in a small playing arena. You must get 10 small blocks to link directly across, and that line will incinerate. Pieces are squirted out from above, and the dropping speed of each pieces increases (depending on which game mode you're playing).
Eventually, the speed gets so fast that you do not have time to think on where, or how to place the pieces. Thankfully though, Tetris allows you to spin or rotate pieces using the simple Nintendo controller buttons. Thus, you can fit pieces in certain places, or build up for unique strategies.

However, the complete randomness is what makes the game very addicting. Since pieces are selected at random, and you only have knowledge of the next block, this gives you very little recon to use for provisions. Combine this with the increasing speed, and you've got yourself one challenging mind game. Sometimes, you'll desperately need a piece, and the game will constantly shoot out the wrong pieces. You have to improvise. Quite frankly, it makes you thankful that Soviet Russia produced one solid game.

Here's a brief excerpt from the instruction manual (credit to Nintendo):
'/। WHAT IS TETRIS? |\'

TETRIS is a new type of puzzle game from the Soviet Union that tests your reflexes. It's really simple to play. Seven different shaped objects fall down the game field one after the other. The object of the game is to keep the blocks from piling up to the top of the game field. To do this, you can move blocks left and right, and rotate them as they fall. If you can completely fill in one horizontal line, that line disappears and you get points. If the blocks pile up to the top of the game field, then that's the end of the game.

TETRIS is simple, easy-to-understand, but difficult to drag yourself away from!

TETRIS originally came from the word "tetra" meaning the number 4 . By rearranging four squares, you can make seven different shapes which are the pieces used in this game. With TETRIS, you can play two types of games: endurance game $A$, and game $B$ where you play for the highest score at the 25 th line.
\#\#\#\#\# GAME INFO \#\#\#\#\#
//////////\\\\\\\\\}
Players: 1-2
Developer: Nintendo
Released: 1989
Rarity: very common
Special Features: n/a
Cover Art on cartridge:

- Shows different blocks rushing towards a bottom chunk of pieces with a
blazing light from above
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- 2) Game Basics
- 

$========================$
The NES controller is quite possibly the best fit for Tetris because of its simplicity, and lack of need for buttons. Simply put, your two buttons rotate the pieces, and everything else is accomplished using the control pad. This is like apples and oranges if you ask me.

KEY representation for each button:

```
                    A = A button (red)
                    B = B button (red)
Control Pad = control pad (black, left)
            START = start button (black, center)
    SELECT = select button (black, center)
```

```
/Menu Controls/
-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=
    START - advances through most menus
        A - confirms selection
        B - rejects selection
Control Pad - navigates through menus
```

```
/Game Controls/
-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=
    SELECT - hides "next block" display
        START - pauses game (blacks out puzzle to prevent cheating)
            A - rotates clockwise
            B - rotates counter-clockwise
Control Pad - moves left/right, press down to speed up dropping speed
- Rotating a piece clockwise will cause for it to shift in its right
direction. Most pieces can be shifted to four different positions, others 2,
and one cannot be rotated (square 2 x 2 block). The next block display gives
```

you a preview of what piece is going to be shot out next. Hiding it makes the game more challenging. Pressing down will cause for a piece to quickly rush to the bottom of the puzzle. Great for speeding up the gameplay.
/Pieces/
-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=
As stated before, there are seven different pieces you will come across during the gameplay of Tetris. Some people name them from letters in the alphabet, while others simply remember them by their shapes. This section will detail each of the pieces, along with their rotation animations, and usefulness throughout the game.

```
    - \ Line Block /
    |___l
    Probably one of the most useful pieces in the game. The line block is
    | | the tallest available piece in the game as it is composed of four
    | | and can easily fill in any long gaps during your puzzle frenzy. The
    |___| only true disadvantage is that its tall shape on higher speeds can
    be fairly hard to rotate.
```

$\qquad$ 1

```
| Usefulness: **** |
    Scarcity: ***** |
    Rotations: 2
```

\ L Block /
Although probably not as great as one would expect, L blocks do
have their frequent uses. In most cases, you'll use them to fill in
gaps of two blocks or greater. Perfect for filling in single nudges
in your lines, or rotating for the "7" shape.
I___ $1 \quad$ _ $\mid$
$\begin{array}{lcl}\text { | Usefulness: ** } & \text { | } \\ \text { | Scarcity: ** } & \text { | } \\ \text { | Rotations: } & 4 & \text { | } \\ \text { ===================== }\end{array}$
$-$
\ J Block /
- -----------
$\qquad$ Pretty much the exact opposite of the L block, the J block mirrors it to every proportion. Used in the same situations, except for left-
$\qquad$ handed scenarios. Again, you may find these useful throughout the game, but there are much better pieces.
$\qquad$
| Usefulness: ** |
| Scarcity: ** |
| Rotations: 4 |
=======================
$\qquad$
\ S Block /
| | | ------------
| Due to its resembling shape of an $S$, most people will find uses for these small pieces. They can often fit into double-wide gaps, or be rotated to fit along step-like shapes. Not too bad of a piece.

```
Usefulness: *** |
    Scarcity: * |
    Rotations: 2 |
```



$==================$
 pieces combined to form a unique one.
$\mid$ Usefulness:
$\left|\begin{array}{cc}* * * * & \mid \\ \mid & \text { Scarcity: } \\ \text { Rotations: } & 4\end{array}\right|$
$-<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>--<>-$

- 3) Game Modes

The creators of Tetris decided to make it more challenging by adding two different gameplay modes. Each of them can be ways of continuing the extensive replayability of the entire game. The following section will briefly describe the goal of each game, along with the scoring methods.


## /Mode A/

$-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=$
This is basically your default, free-style Tetris. The objective of the game is to score as many lines as possible, while getting the highest points total.
To increase your points total, you must score horizontal lines of 10 blocks
across. Get 10 blocks to line across in an entire line, and the line will disappear. All blocks above the line will drop down 1. After you score 10 lines, the game speed will increase by one level. So let's say you're on level 0 , and you score 10 lines, it will then increase to level 1 . The process repeats itself. The game ends when you touch the top of the playing arena with blocks.
>> Before playing Mode A, you can select the starting speed (0 through 9).
>> You may also select a Music Type (1, 2, 3, or none).

- None of your top scores are saved during Tetris, although you may be able to input your name temporarily.

```
***ENDING: Most mode A endings involve creatures flying around a castle.
    The highest score will show a rocket launching off the
    ground. However, most people use Mode A to brag and show off
    their highest Tetris scores.***
```

/Mode B/

This is a tad tougher, although lesser played mode of Tetris. It includes the same rules as above, except the game speed does not increase a level after gaining 10 lines. Instead, your goal is to score 25 lines within a certain game speed, and with certain random blocks spawned on the playing arena. The game ends if you reach the top of the screen with blocks, but you may also win once you score 25 lines.
>> Before playing Mode B, you can select the starting speed (0 through 9).
>> You must select a height ( $0,1,2,3,4$, or 5 ).
-> Height determines how high the random blocks spawn in the playing arena.
>> You may also select a Music Type (1, 2, 3, or none).

- None of your top scores are saved during Tetris, although you may be able to input your name temporarily.
***ENDING: Certain creatures and Nintendo characters appear on the screen on various ledges. Based on how high you score, more characters will appear. Mode $B$ is great for getting a taste of variety as it can be VERY challenging on Level 9, Height 5.***


## /Scoring/

Points are rewarded for scoring lines in Tetris. However, more "bonus" points are awarded for scoring multiple line bursts at once. For example, if you destroyed three Tetris lines at once, that would be a triple. The following table is the scoring totals for both games A \& B.

| LEVEL | 01 | 11 | 21 | 31 | 4 | 51 | 61 | 71 | 8। | 91 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Single | 401 | 801 | 1201 | 1601 | 200 | 2401 | 2801 | 3201 | 3601 | 400 |
| Double | 1001 | 2001 | 3001 | 4001 | 500 | 6001 | 7001 | 8001 | 9001 | 1000 |
| Triple | 3001 | 6001 | 9001 | 12001 | 1500 | 18001 | 21001 | 24001 | 27001 | 3000 |
| TETRIS | 12001 | 24001 | 36001 | 48001 | 6000 | 72001 | 84001 | 96001 | 08001 | 2000 |

- Scores increase in the same way for levels 10 \& higher:


## Singles: +40

Doubles: +100
Triples: +300
TETRISes: +1200

Actual Calculated Score for Mode B:

$$
\text { Clear Score = Real Score + Level \# x } 1000 \text { + Height x } 1000
$$

"That's basically how they calculate your final score on Mode B."


- 4) Strategies
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Even for a fairly simplistic puzzle game like Tetris, there are actually a few strategies you can enforce that may help your gameplay skills. While some of them may seem stupid or generic, try to memorize as many of the tips as possible. Most of these tips will shorten your puzzle-solving time, along with increasing your point totals.
->) TETRIS Strategy (<-
- This prototypical strategy basically relates to mode A. The idea is to score as many four-line TETRIS points as possible. Because of the huge multiplier on TETRISes, it becomes necessary to build up a huge stack of blocks, then usually finish them off with a line block. On speeds 0-5, the player should do the following:


From here on, you should have quite an extinguished points total. You can then focus on finishing off the remaining leftover bricks on your stack of TETRIS buildup, and narrow it down. It truly becomes impossible on higher speeds though because the bricks will be moving so fast that you'll barely have time to navigate them left or right.

## ->) Think Non-Linear (<-

- Many Tetris players simply get overwhelmed with the entire theme that you must "fill" everything to get a line. This isn't entirely true. As a matter of fact, many players overlook an easy line all because they didn't recognize the fact about dissapation. It's ESSENTIAL to remember that a line in Tetris will vanish, and ALL blocks above it drop down one line. Thus, if you see an easy line, take it. Here's what I'm trying to explain:

| । |  | - Say for example that you receive a LINE block. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| \| | \| | In most cases, the blind player would simply |
| \| \# | \# | \# | \# | | \| \# | \# | | place it along the wall vertically. However, if |
| \| \#|\#|\#|\#|\#| | \| \#|\#|\#|\#| | you think for a second, just place it in the |
|  |  | ck gap on the second row. That line w |

vanish leaving you with more points, and a decreased stack of blocks.

There are many other situations which you might come across. Use those $L$ and J blocks to their full use. Don't try to fill everything in like it's a coloring book, but rather expound upon it as if it was a jigsaw puzzle.
->) High Difficulty Mode B Tips (<-

- Some of the extreme speeds (8 or 9) and Height (3-5) can seem like a real pain on Mode $B$ of Tetris. In many cases, people simply say it's impossible, and is a waste of time. You're probably right, but Mode $B$ can be one of the more engaging modes if you get use to it. First of all, Level 9 Height 5 is extremely hard, and your chance of completing it is like $2 \%$ out of every chance. However, this means you shouldn't give up. Here are a few pointers for completing Mode B.
@" BUILD OUTSIDE, then INWARD "@

|  | Despite how random and awkward your height |
| :---: | :---: |
| 1 \| | layout is, always build from the outside toward |
| $\|\#\| \# \mid$ \| \# | \# | | the inside. On the high speeds, the blocks move |
| \| \# \| \| \| \# | | \# \| \| \| \| | | so fast that you actually may not have enough |
| \| \# \| \# | \# \| \| \| \| \| \# \| \# \| \| | time to rotate them into place. This especially |
|  | becomes difficult when you have a large piece jutting out in the middle. |

## @" RANDOM LAYOUTS HELP "@

- Simply put, you're not going to win them all. Each generated height is always different. Sometimes you'll get one with so many skips that it isn't funny. Other times you'll get one with large gaping holes that open up opportunity. If your generated layout looks bad, expect to lose. It simply comes down to luck in this one.


## @" GET A PREVIEW EARLY ON "@

- Right when Mode B starts, you'll notice that your first block is jabbed in on the top of the screen. Quickly scan over the playing arena and input (in your mind) where you could place certain blocks. This is sort of like a quick recon report of the entire random layout, and makes valuable use of ANY spare time you have.

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- 5) Codes
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Even puzzle games have ways of being cheated on. Nintendo decided to pop in a few in-game cheat codes that can be used to help enhance the gameplay. The following section will discuss any cheat codes along with Game Genie codes. I'd like to give credit to:

GameFAQ's Tetris Codes Page - http://www.gamefaqs.com/

- for the following codes. Thanks to any people who submitted the code on the site.
- When you're at the Level Select screen (for either mode), press and hold down the A button. Press it over the game speed you want +10 added to. Now press start. Your game speed will be +10 on whatever default speed (0 through 9) that you highlighted.
|?^?| Instant Clear |?^?|
==========================12
- Open up a Mode B game, then start playing. Hold down select. When the next brick hits the ground, you'll receive a Congratulations message. The game will progress as if you completed the level.

```
/Game Genie Codes/
-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=-=
I'd like to thank:
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http://www.gamegenie.com/

- for these Game Genie codes.

| \\| CODE | \| 1 | EFFECT |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| : : ENEALYNN | \| 1 | two player game |
| : : APSEGYIZ | \| 1 | need 10 lines for mode B |
| : : AISEGYIZ | \\| 1 | need 50 lines for mode B |
| : : EASEGYIZ | \\| 1 | need 80 lines for mode B |
| : : PASAUPPE | \| | | faster falling rate |

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- 6) Common Questions
$==========================$
)) Gameplay ((
<< How does this compare to other Tetris games on the NES? >>
- Well for starters, this is one of the best puzzle games ever, so it's a wise choice to purchase any Tetris game. However, the best available version on the NES is Tengen Tetris, which is basically a rare unlicensed version of Tetris. It features more options, a two-player head-to-head mode, and simply was better than Nintendo's cheap outmake. Unfortunately, Nintendo filed a lawsuit against Tengen, and won. Because of this, all Tengen copies must be destroyed if discovered across the market. It's not like there are Nintendo operatives out there searching for Tengen Tetris, but that's why it's so hard to get a hold of. Tetris 2 is also another optional choice, but no one really enjoyed the sequel.
<< What's your highest lines score ever? >>
- Unfortunately, I'm not one of the Tetris gurus out there. However, I've managed around 142 as my max. That's starting from Level 0 of course, on mode A as well. I know someone personally who reached 183, but there have been players to reach the extreme 200s, and even "recorded" videos documenting every mode. Sick stuff if you ask me.
- No, the Communists did not create Tetris as a spy tool, although it has been conspired by historians (heh, it would be cool though). It was created and inspired by a Russian programmer, and has probably been one of the most influential games to hit the video game industry (in my opinion).
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- 7) Copyright/Distribution/Reproduction Guidelines -

This FAQ/Strategy Guide/Walkthrough is my own published work, and copyrighted by Christopher Zawada. Whatever you do, DO NOT edit this FAQ in any way. DO NOT steal anything from this FAQ. If you want to use some information in your own guide, simply ask me. If you want to place this guide on your website, either link to the GameFAQs game page, or download the file and place it on your own web server. Basically, you can post this on your website as long as its in ORIGINAL form, and not linking directly to GameFAQs. Aside from that, all proper credit is due when necessary. Also, don't even think about selling FAQs. Trying to prosper off of other people's work will get you in big time trouble (coming from an eBay seller myself).

This is a list of the current known sites that host my FAQs:

- http://www.gamefaqs.com/
- http://www.ign.com/
- https://www.neoseeker.com/
- http://www.cheatcc.com/
- http://www.cheatplanet.com/
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- 8) Proper Credit

8) Proper Credit

I'd like to thank the following people for their help in making this FAQ possible:
)) CJayC (( for constantly updating GameFAQs, and dedicating his entire life to it. Takes a lot of effort to keep a site going this long.
)) GameFAQ's NES Tetris Codes Page (( for providing two in-game cheats. Thanks to anyone who contributed the codes to the site. Great to start playing on Level 19.
)) Gamegenie.com (( for providing a few brief Game Genie codes that can add replayability to the already "Tetrical" experience. Nice to see you're still supporting older cheats for older games.
)) Russia (( for creating one of the greatest puzzle games ever. Not that your country actually produced the game, but the sheer fact that a person from your country did create the game is simply amazing.

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"Some people make sacrifices to make other people happy." - Chris Zawada
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