

The Machinations



The Story

You turn on your Commodore 64 and start connecting to the mainframe. As you initialise the sytem... an error occurs!

To get the system back up and running you will have to fix it – from the inside.

Are you up for the challenge of designing your own Machinations and restore the connection to the mainframe, one binary cell at a time?

Starting the Game

Load your digital copy of The Machinations to your Commodore 64 (real or emulated) by typing:

LOAD "*", 8, 1 [return]

followed by:

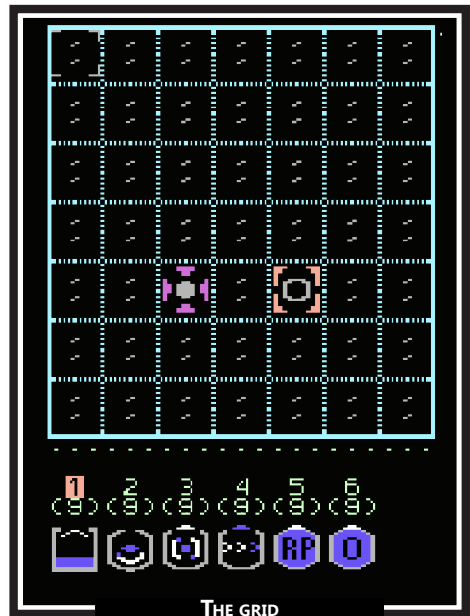
RUN [return]

The Screen

In the left hand side area of your screen you will see a 7 x 7 grid. This is where your modules can be positioned.

Under the grid, you will find the modules you have available to

complete the current level. The number at top is the keyboard shortcut to use that module, the number below in brackets is the quantity of modules available to you this level. The number for the keyboard shortcut of the module type that is active will be highlighted.



To the right of the screen you will find the level information, the level code (should you want to quit the game and continue from that level next time) and it may also include some gameplay hints and a summary of the keyboard shortcut controls.

Gameplay

Every level has a Source and a Target position in the grid. The **Source** emits binary cells, while the **Target** position receives those same binary cells.



Your goal is to position modules in the grid with the right polarity and orientation to take at least four binary cells from the source position to the target position.

Some levels have blocked cells where you cannot place elements, and both modules and binary cells will collide against them stopping execution. Collisions are not allowed!



The Controls

You control the position of the blinking cursor with the Joystick in port 2. The fire button will confirm the position where to insert a module.



With the keyboard you can control the remaining options:

- **1** - **6** selects the module type. Not every level has all modules available
- **D** deletes the module in the grid position where the cursor is
- **C** clears all modules on the grid and restarts the level
- **M** toggles the music and the sound effects
- **P** changes the polarity of the module in the location where the cursor is positioned
- **R** rotates clockwise the module in the location where the cursor is positioned
- **E** rotates counterclockwise the module in the location where the cursor is positioned
- **SPACEBAR** toggles between build mode and execution (run) mode
- **+** and **-** change execution order
- **N** takes you to the next level once the level objectives have been accomplished
- **G** changes the grid colour, there are 15 options to choose from

The Modules

These are the modules that you will encounter in The Machinations. All modules can be rotated and some can toggle their polarity.

Push/Pull This module can not only push a binary cell or another module a square away from itself but also, when its polarity is reversed, it can pull a binary cell or another module towards itself.



Rotate This module picks up and rotates a binary cell (or another module). It will move it clockwise with normal polarity, and counterclockwise when the polarity is reversed.



Turn This module turns another module in place (clockwise) in 90 degree increments. Changing polarity will make the other module rotate counterclockwise.



Move This module moves a binary cell (or another module) alongside itself.



Changing polarity will reverse the movement direction.



Reverse Polarity This module toggles the polarity of the module it's pointing towards. It is not possible to change the polarity of this module.



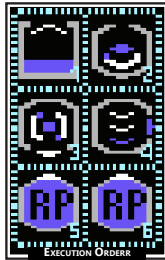
On/Off This module toggles on and off the module it's pointing towards. It is not possible to change the polarity of this module.



Tips and Hints

- Drop a module in the grid and adjust its orientation by rotating clockwise or counterclockwise, but don't forget about checking the polarity, which reverses the effect!
- A module can not only apply its effect to a binary cell, but it can also apply its effect to another module, creating a true Machination.

- Execution order is very important. Modules perform actions sequentially following their execution order. The initial execution order will follow the order in which you have placed them into the grid but you can adjust that order by pressing the **+** and **-** buttons. The execution order displays on the side of right hand side pane of the screen as well as a small number on the bottom right corner of each module on the grid.



Credits

C64 version © 2022

Haplo Code, game engine, additional graphics, SFX

Marukpa Additional code, graphics, charset and game manual

Music © Barry Leitch

Original concept and levels from [The Sequence] by One Man Band

Music and concept have been used with the express permission of their respective owners.

Get this game from
h4plo.itch.io/the-machinations

