

Product Information

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Web: <<http://home.nycap.rr.com/compleatmac/xfilestrivia.html>>

Shareware Fee: \$10

System Requirements

System 7 or later

6 MB available RAM

From the moment the game begins, with the eerie X-Files theme playing in the background and visions of UFOs and mysterious hands appearing as if from nowhere, you will realize that someone has taken great care to make your X-Files Trivia Challenge 1.5 game experience as true to the spirit of the X-Files as possible. That person is Brian Kelley, who, along with graphics and animation help from Joe Koomen, has created an interesting Trivia Challenge fit for any X-Phile. Brian Kelley is also the creator of the interesting MacCentral Trivia Challenge <<http://www.maccentral.com/news/9811/03.trivia.shtml>>; and, as the resident "Trivia Guy" here at ATPM, gets high marks from me for his creation of an X-Files Trivia Challenge worthy of the most fanatic follower of one of television's shining moments (and there are few).

The game is created using the impressive SuperCard Technology (IncWell DMG <<http://www.incwell.com>>), an evolution of HyperCard. It is easy-to-play, with most of the over 200 questions being multiple-choice and a few true-or-false. After starting the game, the opening graphics and theme music are designed to get you into the mood. The gameplay is straightforward. When a new question appears, simply click on what you believe to be the correct answer. You will be informed whether your answer was right or wrong along with appropriate sound effects. Often the answers (right or wrong) will contain some snippet of information explaining or expanding upon the choice you made. Your score is kept on screen with one point given for each correct answer.

With the embedded theme music and wonderful graphics, The X-Files Trivia Challenge holds much promise for future versions. Unfortunately, Version 1.5 suffers from some problems that are not all the author's doing. The first, and most damaging, is the conscious decision of X-Files creator Chris Carter not to show the X-Files episode titles at any time during the TV show, presumably to increase the mystery surrounding the X-Files. They can only be found in The TV Guide or a fairly complete Sunday newspaper TV section. Since a large number of the questions in the X-Files Trivia Challenge are related to specific episodes, and it refers to them by name, they are too difficult for the casual viewer. This might discourage people from playing the game more than once and discarding it. Not a good idea if you want your shareware fees to be paid! But as this appears to be more likely a labor of love, I doubt that Brian intended to get rich from it.

There are three other problems that I have with the game:

1. The Read Me doesn't explain how many questions constitute a game (I think it's about thirty). At some point, and without warning, you are asked if you wish to play again.
2. The questions appear at random, but are often repeated within the same game. This can be annoying if you knew the answer the first time, but allows for guessing if you didn't.
3. There is no way to keep track of high scores. (The best I've done so far is 25 out of 30 correct.) It would be nice to have a "High Score Honor Roll" or some way to be able to challenge others and compare scores.

Brian has replied to my concerns and informs me that he will improve the Read Me, implement no-repeats, and work on a way to keep score. He says Version 2.0 will be available as soon as time permits him to work on the improvements.

With these future improvements in mind, I recommend any X-File fan check out The X-Files Trivia Challenge 1.5. It is truly a challenge, and lots of fun. To whet your appetite, I have provided a representative sample of questions as this month's ATPM "Trivia Challenge 5.01—Paranormal Puzzler."

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