COUNTRY RIDE

Game manual. A racing game for the Amstrad CPC 6128.



A fast car, a long road and never quite enough time. Race the clock over five stages, through curves, crests and dips, past the traffic, on a road of four, three or two lanes. At the end of each stage the road forks, and the side you are on decides where you go next.

Contents

Getting started 2
Picking a car and the difficulty 2
Controls 3
The screen 4
The race 5
The stages 6
On the road 7
Tips 8
Sound 8
Credits 8

Getting started

What you need

- An Amstrad CPC 6128, or an emulator of one. The game uses the 6128's second 64K of memory.
- The disc image, **countryride.dsk**.

So far the game has been tested in emulators, including Retro Virtual Machine. It has not been tried on real hardware yet.

Loading

Insert the disc and type:

```
RUN"COUNTRY
```

Then press RETURN. First the REVIVE8BIT screen appears for 10 seconds (press SPACE to skip it). Then the title screen with the four cars appears, and after about 20 seconds they start turning round. When a flashing frame appears around the first car, you can pick yours. Once you have, the game loads, which takes about 20 seconds more.

Picking a car and the difficulty



- Press **E**, **M** or **H** to pick the difficulty. The one you pick flashes under the cars. **MEDIUM** is picked to begin with.
- Press **1** to **4** to pick a car and start at once.
- Or move the flashing frame with the **cursor keys**, **O** and **P**, or the **joystick**, then start with **fire**, **space** or **RETURN**.

The difficulty decides what hitting a car costs you. Everything else is the same.

Difficulty	Hitting a car
EASY	Wherever you hit it, you drop to just below the traffic's speed and are pushed a little to the side.
MEDIUM	Square on, you lose most of your speed. Off its side you lose less, but you are thrown across the road.
HARD	As on MEDIUM, but you lose more speed and are thrown further.

The four cars drive differently. The bars on the screen rate each one out of five:

Car	What it is	Speed	Accel	Grip
ROSSO GT	Wide red sports car, with a lip on its tail and big rims	5	4	3
BERLINETTA	Wide red sports car, as it left the factory	5	5	2
WEDGE TURBO	Low yellow wedge with a louvred engine cover	4	3	5
TOURING	White estate with a spoiler over its rear window	3	5	4

- **Speed** is the car's top speed.
- **Accel** is how quickly it gets there: two thirds of its top speed in about 6 to 8 seconds, the last of it slowly, as an engine near its top.
- **Grip** is how quickly you can steer it across the road, and how little a curve carries it outwards.

The cars have the gears and the top speeds of the one in Out Run, the ROSSO GT its own. The rest they do as a car does. The engine pulls hardest from a standstill and less the faster you go. A climb takes speed and a fall gives it. Off the pedal the air slows them: hard at speed, hardly at all when slow, where the car rolls on. A curve throws the car outwards as hard as its speed squared, so that a little slower is a lot easier: at full speed you can hold only the gentlest curves, at half speed nearly all of them.

Controls

Action	Keyboard	Joystick
Steer left	Cursor left, **O**	Left
Steer right	Cursor right, **P**	Right
Pedal	**Space**	Fire
Brake	**Z**	Second fire
LOW gear	Cursor up, **Q**	Up
HIGH gear	Cursor down, **A**	Down
Pause, and go on	**ESC**	
Music off, or on again	**M**	

You change gear yourself, as in Out Run. You start in LOW, which pulls hard, hardest of all from a standstill, but goes no faster than two thirds of your top speed. HIGH reaches the top speed but pulls two thirds as hard from low down: change up at about half of your top speed. Change down again after a crash or a big bump. With neither the pedal nor the brake held, the air slows the car: at full speed by about a seventh of its top speed a second, at half speed by less than half of that, and hardly at all at a crawl. The brake stops it from full speed in a little over two seconds, and while you hold it the car's brake lights glow red.

The screen



On the screen	What it tells you
TIME	The seconds you have left. At 0 the race is over.
SPEED	A gauge of 8 segments, with your gear under it: L (LOW) or H (HIGH).
TOTAL TIME	How long you have been racing since GO!.
CHECKPOINT	A gauge of 8 segments that fills on the way to the end of the stage.

Under the gear is a line of messages:

Message	When it shows
PRESS FIRE	In the demo, blinking. Press fire to race.
TOP TIMES	In the demo, followed by the five best times.
GET READY	Before the race. The count 3, 2, 1 then shows where the gear is.
GO!	The race has begun.
STAGE 1 to **STAGE 5**	The stage you are starting.
DESERT RIVIERA	A fork ahead: the two stages you can take, left and right.
EXTENDED TIME	You reached a checkpoint, and got more time.
TIME UP	TIME has reached 0.

Message	When it shows
FINISH	You got past the fifth stage.
FASTEST TIME!	Your time is the best of the five.
GAME OVER	The race is over.
PAUSE	You pressed ESC. Press it again to go on.

The race

The start

While the demo drives, press fire or space. **GET READY** shows, the road flattens out and straightens, and the car brakes to a standstill in the third lane from the left. After the count of 3, 2, 1 comes **GO!**, and you drive off from a standstill.

The clock

TIME starts at 64 seconds and counts down. **TOTAL TIME** counts up.

A race is five stages of about half a minute each. At the end of each of the first four, **EXTENDED TIME** adds to your **TIME**: 44 seconds at the first checkpoint, then 43, 42 and 41. **TIME** never goes above 99.

The forks

A few seconds before each checkpoint, the message line shows the two stages that can come next, the left one on the left and the right one on the right.

You will not see the road split. All that counts is where you are about half a second before the checkpoint:

- on the left of the road, or on its middle: the left stage;
- on the right of the road: the right stage.

There are nine stages in all, and sixteen routes through them.

The end

Past the fifth stage comes **FINISH**. The car brakes to a standstill on the straight that follows, and **TOTAL TIME** is your time for the race.

If **TIME** reaches 0 first, **TIME UP** shows and the car brakes to a standstill. You can still steer it. **GAME OVER** follows.

Either way, the demo then drives on from there.

The best times

The game keeps the five best times to the finish for as long as the machine is on. They start at 2'37"50, 2'45"00, 2'52"50, 3'00"00 and 3'07"50. A faster race takes its place among them, and they all show in the demo, after **TOP TIMES**.

The stages

Each stage has its own road and colours, and each next stage has more traffic. The first is always the COUNTRYSIDE. Far off over the mountains hang clouds, in each stage's light: they turn with the mountains as the road bends, and the wind takes them slowly to the left.

Stage	Left	Right
1	**COUNTRYSIDE**: curves and hills by turns	
2	**DESERT**: long straights, big crests	**RIVIERA**: the coast, sweeping and gentle
3	**SUMMIT**: hill after hill, in snow and ice	**MESA**: canyons, deep dips, sharp curves
4	**SUNSET**: long sweeping curves	**AUTUMN**: winding over hills
5	**NIGHT**: winding in the dark	**STORM**: grey skies, hard curves

COUNTRYSIDE



DESERT



RIVIERA



SUMMIT



MESA



SUNSET



AUTUMN



NIGHT



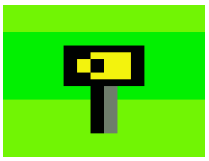
STORM



On the road

Curves

A curve carries the car towards its outside unless you steer against it. The sharper the curve the harder it pulls, and twice as fast it pulls four times as hard. At full speed all but the gentlest curves pull harder than you can steer; slow enough, you can hold any of them. When the tyres squeal they are slipping: the car runs wide and loses speed until they grip again. Letting go of the pedal slows the car only gently unless you are going very fast, so brake before a sharp curve.

Sign	What it tells you
	**Yellow board with chevrons.** Stands at the start of any curve that is more than gentle, on its outside. The chevrons point the way it bends.
	**Speed limit.** Stands on the right before the sharpest curves.

Hills

Where the road climbs ahead of you the car loses speed, and where it falls away it gains it, whatever you hold. Up a climb it pulls away slower, and even at full speed it drops a little, which the engine is slow to bring back. Over a crest it picks up speed quicker, and off the pedal it rolls on. It never goes faster than its top speed for a hill, and a car standing on one stays where it is.

Lanes

The road has four, three or two lanes, and it is narrower with fewer. Where the number changes, the road narrows or widens from the horizon towards you, and the traffic moves over before you get there. On two lanes the curves are gentler.

The grass

With a wheel on the grass the car goes no faster than three quarters of its top speed, and half a lane further out no faster than two fifths of it. Out there the tyres also hold half as well: the car answers the wheel late and half as much, slides on after you let go, and takes twice as long to brake. With fewer lanes the grass begins nearer the middle of the road.

Traffic

Up to two cars at a time drive ahead of you, slower than your car can go. They come more often the further you get, and more often on a fork's right-hand stage than on its left.

A car with a flashing indicator is moving over to the next lane on that side. Your own car flashes too when you move across the road.

A bump. Hit a car and for a second you are shoved away from it, wobbling, though you can go on steering. What it costs depends on the difficulty, and on MEDIUM and HARD on where you hit it. Square on, you lose most of your speed and hardly move sideways. Off its side, you lose less, but you are thrown across the road, and out onto the grass unless you steer against it. Hit one at three quarters of your top speed or more, though, and it is a crash, as below: the car flips over.

Bushes, trees and signs

Hit a bush, or the trunk of a tree or sign, and you crash. The car spins out of your control for as long as it slides, up to a second and a half at speed and hardly at all at a crawl. Then it drives itself back to the middle of the road, and is yours again there, already rolling. Hit one at three quarters of your top speed or more, and the car flips over, as in Out Run: the blow turns it sideways, it is thrown into the air and tumbles over three times along the road, bouncing lower each time, and lands on its wheels as it comes to rest. About three seconds after the blow it is turned back, and then drives back to the middle of the road.

Tips

- Keep the pedal down on the straights: speed is time.
- Change up to HIGH at about half speed, and back down to LOW when you have slowed right down.
- Watch for the yellow boards, and start steering as the curve starts.
- Brake before a sharp curve rather than run wide onto the grass: it costs you less. Lifting off alone is enough only for the gentle ones.
- If the tyres squeal, you are too fast for the curve: slow down.
- Stay off the grass. It slows you down hard, the car slides on it, and it is where the crashes are.
- Take a climb with all the speed you have, and use the crests to get it back.
- Move out early when a car is ahead. Do not pass on the side its indicator is flashing.
- When the two stage names appear, get to that side of the road in good time.
- After hitting a car off its side, steer against the shove to stay off the grass.
- Crashes cost far more time than bumps. A bump is over in a second and leaves you rolling, while a crash at speed costs you four seconds and nearly all your speed.

Sound

The race has its own music, and the car its engine, whose note rises with your speed and rumbles on the grass. The tyres squeal in hard turns. The count beeps, GO! and the checkpoints ring, bumps and crashes have their noise, and TIME UP and FINISH have their own few notes.

M turns the music off, or on again from the start of the tune, and the engine and the effects go on. You can also press it in the demo, which is otherwise silent, to set it for the races to come.

Credits

Country Ride. Revive8bit, 2026, Vasper.