

Cajun
GAMES



INTRODUCTION

A long time ago, when the world was still a harsh and savage place, there roamed creatures so strange that we would hardly recognize them today. Food was scarce, and these creatures had to depend on each other for survival. They were constantly on the lookout for predators, and in the blink of an eye even a predator could become prey. What may seem brutal and cruel to us was the natural way of life for these creatures, and all life depended on this delicate balance of nature, or *Food Chain*.



The oceans were dominated by sea serpents called **Seaosaurs** who could swim more powerfully than any other creature. As food in the water became scarcer, Seaosaurs were forced to come on land to find food, and they soon evolved into amphibious creatures, able to live both in water and on land. Because they still possessed great speed, Seaosaurs developed a strategy of hiding in the water and lunging onto land, capturing their prey in a split second.

One creature the Seaosaur loved to eat was the **Hovenboof**, an omnivorous creature able to eat both animals and plants. Although they preferred the taste of meat, Hovenboofs were able to survive by eating grass if they had to. This allowed them to survive even when their primary food source was very low.



Hovenboofs' favorite meal consisted of **Yug Yugs**, simple-minded creatures who tended to eat first and think later. They didn't care about much else besides food, and they didn't mind eating one of their own kind if food was scarce. Yug Yugs represented the beginning of civilization, and had simple tools for hunting. They made fairly easy targets for Hovenboofs because they were so dim-witted and slow.

Magmaraptors ruled the skies, attacking their prey from above without warning, and they had a special taste for Seabosaurs. Magmaraptors' only predators were Yug Yugs, who hunted them with spears. Magmaraptors had excellent vision and were able to see their prey at great distances. This helped them survive even if there was no prey nearby.



OBJECTIVE

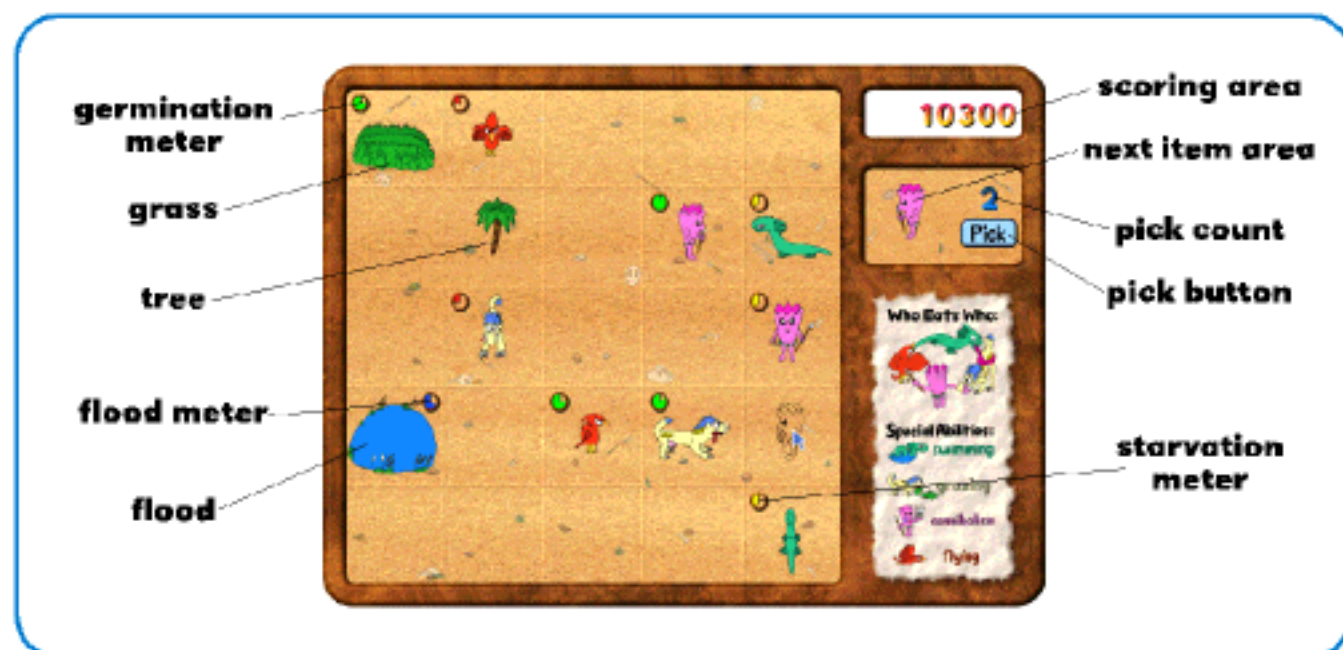
The objective of *Food Chain* is to score as many points as possible, by causing creatures to eat each other, while avoiding creature extinction and overpopulation. The best way to gain points is to try to build as many sequences of eatings, or **chain eatings**, as you can. Once you get practice, you can build longer and longer chains for some really big points! Building a chain takes strategy, however, and it helps to plan out your chain carefully. A chain eating that includes each creature eating its main prey is called a **complete chain** and earns the best bonus.

In addition to gaining points, there are certain things you have to watch out for that will cause the game to come to an abrupt end. **Extinction** poses a constant threat toward the creatures of *Food Chain*. A creature becomes extinct when there are no longer any of that creature on the board. Creatures may suddenly go extinct if the last remaining survivor is eaten or starves to death, so try to keep an eye on any creatures that there may be only one or two of.

Another threat to your creatures is **overpopulation**. This happens when the board becomes so full that there are no empty squares left.

Don't get too discouraged when the game ends. Try to play strategically and learn from your mistakes. You'll learn to keep your creatures healthy and plentiful, and pretty soon you'll be a *Food Chain* pro!

GAME BOARD



The game board is divided up into a grid of 25 squares. Each game begins with the board populated by a standard arrangement of eight creatures. It's your job to place the next creature on the board. Before a creature is placed, it will appear as an outline of itself. This allows you to play around with where you want to place it on the board.

Creatures can be placed anywhere on the board where there is an empty square. They can also be placed in floods. Creatures *can't* be placed on top of each other or on an already existing object, such as grass or trees.

The **next item area** is where the next creature or **specialty item** randomly appears. The specialty items are:

**Reverser**

Causes a creature to reverse direction. For example, a creature facing up will turn to face down, a creature facing right will turn to face left, etc.

**Clockwise Turner**

Causes a creature to make a 1/4-turn clockwise. For example, a creature facing up will face right, a creature facing right will turn to face down, etc.

**Counterclockwise Turner**

Causes a creature to make a 1/4-turn counterclockwise. For example, a creature facing up will face left, a creature facing right will turn to face up, etc.

**Grim Reaper**

Causes...you guessed it...sudden death! The creature the Grim Reaper is used on will die and a patch of grass will grow in its place.

**Cloud**

Causes a flood that occupies one square on the game board. Clouds may be used on any square, regardless of whether it's occupied or not. If a creature is occupying the square, the flood will cause it to drown. *(There's one exception to this rule. Can you think of what it is?)*

The **pick button** allows you to use a **pick**, which lets you replace whatever creature or specialty item is in the next item area with one of your choice. Being able to pick your next creature or object is very useful. Do you desperately need a Clockwise Turner to build a complete chain? Are the Yug Yugs about to go extinct? Perhaps it's time to use your handy pick button.



Pressing the pick button opens a dialog box that displays all the creatures facing in all directions, as well as all the specialty items. You can pick something by clicking on it and pressing the **use button**, or you can speed things up by just by double-clicking on the creature or specialty item. You can also press the **cancel button** if you change your mind about using a pick.

Try to be sparing with your picks, though, because your chances to pick are limited. The number of picks you have remaining is represented by the **pick count**. You're given one chance to pick at the beginning of each game, and each time you make a complete chain you get an additional pick, or an **extra pick bonus**. This is an incentive for building complete chains, not to mention all those nice bonus points!

Cheat Code: typing **100picks** while playing Food Chain will give you 100 extra picks! This can come in handy if you want to practice making long chains. Keep in mind, though, that any score achieved using the cheat code won't be saved as a high score.

The **Who Eats Who** illustration shows the main order of predator and prey. The creatures of *Food Chain* are very particular about what they eat, and rarely deviate from their favorite diet. Knowing this order is important for strategic planning. If ever you aren't sure of the food chain, just refer to this illustration. It'll always be right there to help you.



Each creature in *Food Chain* has a special ability, something that sets it apart from the rest. The **Special Abilities** illustration shows what these are:



Seosaurus are great swimmers and they can survive in the water.



Hovenboofs are omnivores, so if Yug Yugs are scarce, they can survive by grazing on grass.



Yug Yugs are cannibals. They love to eat Magmaraptors, but they don't mind having another Yug Yug as a little snack.



Magmaraptors are able to fly over long distances, even over other objects, to capture food.

Learning to use these special abilities to your advantage can really help advance your game. You'll find they come in very handy during play, and they can help you get out of a sticky situation!

GAME PLAY

In order for a predator to eat its prey, they have to be in neighboring squares. Also, the predator has to be facing its prey, but the prey doesn't have to be facing its predator. For example, a Yug Yug has to be looking at a Magmaraptor to eat it, but the Magmaraptor can be looking away from the Yug Yug.



not neighboring—no eating



predator not facing prey—no eating



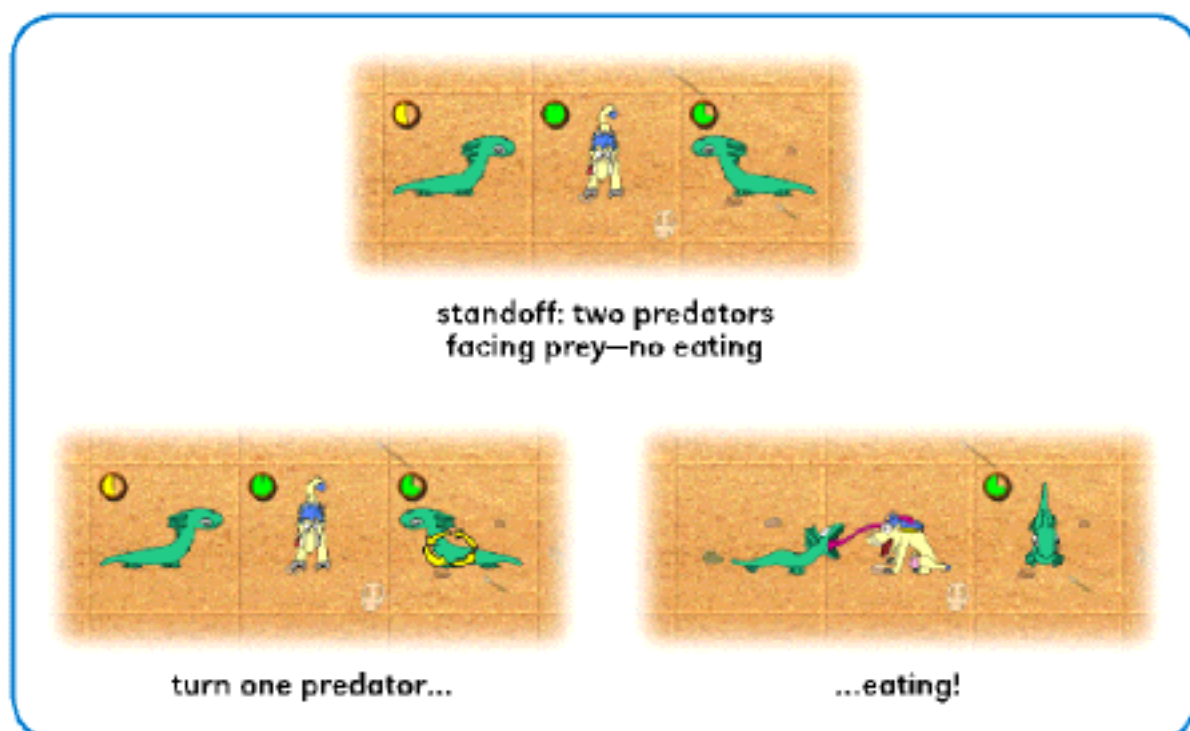
neighboring & facing...



...eating!

In certain situations, there can be a **standoff**, or a situation where more than one creature is trying to eat. Like many creatures in the wild, the creatures of *Food Chain* are very cautious and won't go after a meal unless they know it's a sure thing. Here are some examples:

- If more than one of the same species is facing a single prey, neither creature will eat it. For example, if two Seosaurs are facing a single Havenboof, neither Seosaur will make a move. One will wait for the other to move or be killed before attacking. Magmaraptors are a slight exception to this rule, because if two of them are facing a single Seosaur and are unequal distances from it, the one that's closest will eat the Seosaur.



- If two or more Yug Yugs are positioned so that more than one cannibalistic eating may occur simultaneously in the same chain, none of them will eat each other. Each will wait for the other Yug Yugs to move or be killed before attacking.



standoff: two Yug Yugs may eat simultaneously—no eating



turn one Yug Yug...



...eating!

Creatures eat at different speeds. If there's a situation where two possible eatings can occur, the creature who eats fastest will eat first. The order from fastest to slowest is Seaosaur, Hovenboof, Yug Yug, Magmaraptor. The creatures are listed in the **Special Abilities** illustration in this order for easy reference. So, for example, if a Seaosaur is facing a Hovenboof and a Magmaraptor is facing the Seaosaur, the Seaosaur will eat the Hovenboof instead of the Magmaraptor eating the Seaosaur, because the Seaosaur is faster than the Magmaraptor.



both Magmaraptor and Seaosaur can eat...



...but only Seaosaur does because it's faster

There's no time limit per turn. However, once a creature is placed on the board, a small circle, or **starvation meter**, will appear next to it. This represents the creature's life span, which is made up of 25 turns. When a creature is first placed on the board, the starvation meter is full, indicating a healthy life span. Each turn you take will decrease the meter's level, and when it runs out, the creature will die.

Keeping an eye on your creatures' meters will help you protect them from starvation. Think about which creatures can be sacrificed and which need to be kept alive. Remember to keep them stuffed and happy!

There are meters for floods and grass, as well. Floods have an **evaporation meter**—when its level runs out, the flood will dry up and disappear. Grass has a **germination meter**—when its level runs out, the grass will spawn into a tree. Once trees grow there's no way to get rid of them, and if too many grow, they can severely limit your movement. So try not to let too much grass accumulate on the board and don't forget who can eat it!

Pressing the mouse button while the cursor is over a meter will cause a number to appear indicating how many turns are left before that meter runs out. This can be helpful when trying to determine which of your creatures are in most desperate need of food.

When a game ends, clicking the mouse button or hitting any key will bring you back to the game options screen. Hitting any key during play will pause the game.

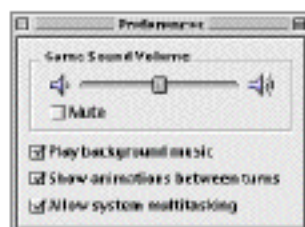
MENUS AND DIALOG BOXES

For your convenience, some of the more commonly used menu items are available as buttons on the game options screen.

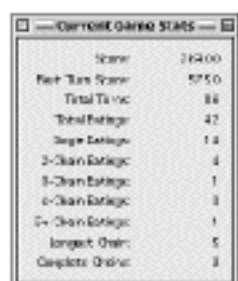
Under the **File** menu are the following menu items:

- **New Game**—begins a new game
- **Resume Game**—continues a game already in progress
- **Tutorial**—runs a narrated tutorial

Under the **Edit** menu is the **Preferences...** menu item. Selecting this will bring up a dialog box which allows you to control several game functions.



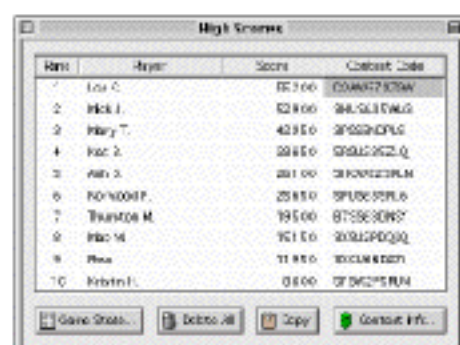
- In the **Game Sound Volume** area, you can change the sound volume by dragging the slider. Checking the **Mute** checkbox will turn the sound off completely.
- The **Play background music** checkbox allows you to turn the background music on and off.
- The **Show animations between turns** checkbox lets you decide whether you want to see the little animations that take place between turns, such as blinking, tail wagging, etc.
- The **Allow system multitasking** checkbox lets you turn system multitasking on and off. Food Chain has low system requirements, letting you play the game while performing background tasks, such as downloading files from the Internet. Allowing system multitasking may cause the game animation to become choppy on older computers, though.



Score:	219.00
Best Time Score:	575.0
Total Time:	84
Total Fatigue:	42
Single Fatigue:	1.4
2-Clean Fatigue:	4
3-Clean Fatigue:	1
4-Clean Fatigue:	3
5+ Clean Fatigue:	1
Longest Chain:	5
Complete Order:	3

Under the **Scores** menu is the **Current Game Stats...** menu item. Selecting this will show the statistics for the game in progress or for a game that just ended.

Also under the **Scores** menu is the **High Scores...** menu item. Selecting this brings up the current high scores. The top ten high scores are displayed, and each includes the player's name, the score for that game, and a contest code. You'll need the contest code if you want to enter any *Food Chain* high scores contests. Press the **Contest Info...** button to find out more about them. The **Copy** button can come in handy for copying scores and contest codes for entering these contests. If you double-click a High Score or select it and press the **Game Stats...** button, the statistics for that game will be displayed. The **Delete All** button is used to erase all the current high scores.



Rank	Player	Score	Contest Code
1	Lee C.	55.000	00A0028794
2	Mike J.	52.800	94A-GL15WAG
3	Mary T.	40.900	3F032H0PLG
4	Kat Z.	39.800	090J20522_Q
5	Van Z.	38.100	3H000223PLM
6	NOV000P.	25.800	8PL0835PL6
7	Travis M.	19.500	8759830NS7
8	Mac M.	15.100	209J2P03QJ
9	Paul	11.800	100J000007
10	Robert L.	0.600	0706215PLM

Buttons: Game Stats... Delete All Copy Contest Info...

CREDITS

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