

# 8 Puzzle

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## Documentation

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1. Intended Readership

This document is intended for the end-users or gamers of the 8 Puzzle game developed by Zander Labuschagne. The user guide section is focussed on the UNIX version of the game.

## 1.2. Applicability

This user guide applies only to the 8 Puzzle game developed by Zander Labuschagne.

## 1.3. Purpose

The aim of this document is to aid the end-user in the understanding of this 8 Puzzle game and to provide assistance if needed.

## 1.4. Motivation and Background

This software is part of an Artificial Intelligence project presented by Dr. Tiny Du Toit at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The goal of this project is to provide students with practical experience in the subject of artificial intelligence, this will help them to understand the algorithms better and to enable them to implement new algorithms learnt at a level of comfort and without struggle. This software is the first part of two, the first part is only the game where a human player plays the game. The second part adds an additional artificial intelligent part to the game where an artificial intelligent algorithm will be implemented by the student to solve the puzzle in the least number of moves. (du Toit, 2016).

# 2. Literature Study

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The 8-puzzle first started out as the 15-puzzle designed in the 1870's by a mathematician, Sam Loyd. Sam Loyd designed many puzzles, but the 15-puzzle had a winning prize of a \$1,000 for the first person to solve the puzzle. Up to date, nobody has ever claimed the prize because the 15-puzzle is actually unsolvable. As a result this caused a simplified and solvable version of the 15 puzzle namely the 8 puzzle. (Archer, 2006).

# 3. User Guide

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## 3.1. Installation

No official installation is necessary, the program or game can be started by clicking or double clicking (depending on your operating system and settings) on the 8Puzzle\_UNIX.jar file if you are using a UNIX-like system. If you are a Windows user, then you must double click on the 8Puzzle\_Windows.bat file which will open in a terminal window.

## 3.2. System Requirements

### 3.2.1. Operating Systems

This game functions on any UNIX-like or Windows system. However if you are using Microsoft Windows, you will not be able to run the game with graphical capabilities, thus you will be using a command line interface but all functions are the same of the UNIX version.

8Puzzle\_UNIX runs successful with graphical interface on:

- Apple MacOS X El Capitan 10.11.3
- Elementary OS Freya 0.3.2
- Kali Linux 2016.1
- Oracle Linux 7.2
- Red Hat Enterprise Server 7.0
- Ubuntu 14.10

8Puzzle\_Windows runs successful without graphical interface on:

- Microsoft Windows 10
- Microsoft Windows 7

### 3.2.2. Hardware Requirements

- Keyboard
- Mouse or Trackpad (UNIX version)
- Computer Monitor
- Speaker or Headphones Recommended

### 3.2.3. Additional Software Requirements

- Java 1.8
- PDF Document Viewer to view the help

## 3.4. Game Overview

### 3.4.1. 8 Puzzle Game Rules

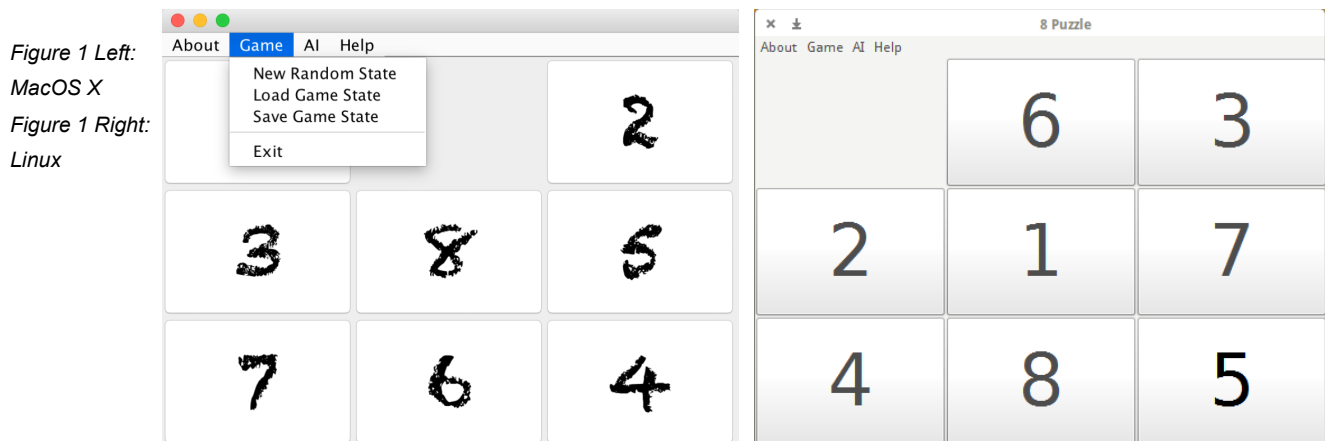
The puzzle becomes solved when the user has moved all tiles into some meaningful order, the order is not fixed, however the default is starting from 1 at the top left and ending at 8 at the bottom middle with a blank space to the right of the 8.

The user can manipulate the order of the tiles by clicking on them, the tile will only move if the attempted move is a valid move. A valid move can only be if the tile clicked on is adjacent to the blank space, if so the tile will move into the blank space leaving a new blank space in the tile's previous position.

### 3.4.2. Features

#### - Game -> New Random State

This feature can be used by clicking on the “Game” dropdown list in the menu bar, followed by clicking on the “New Random State” menu item in the “Game” dropdown list. This will generate a new pseudo random game state which one can start with to play the game like in the example of *Figure 1*.



#### - Game -> Load Game State

This feature can be used by clicking on the “Game” dropdown list in the menu bar, followed by clicking on the “Load Game State” menu item in the “Game” dropdown list. This will open a dialog window where the end-user can browse for a specific comma separated value(.csv) file which contains a game state. After the user has loaded a .csv file which's contents is in the appropriate format, the game will reset and start in the state contained in the .csv file. Refer to *Figure 3*.

The .csv file should contain 9 values which is separated by commas (",") and contain one “B” letter which denotes the blank tile. The “B” should always be uppercase. Refer to *Figure 4*.

Examples: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, B

2,4,6,8,B,3,5,7

This file should also contain a second line of comma separated values which indicates a winning state.

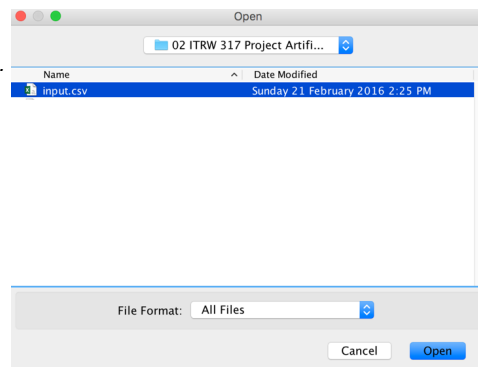
```

input.csv
1  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, B, 8
2  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, B

```

Figure 3: Example of a .csv file opened in a text editor.

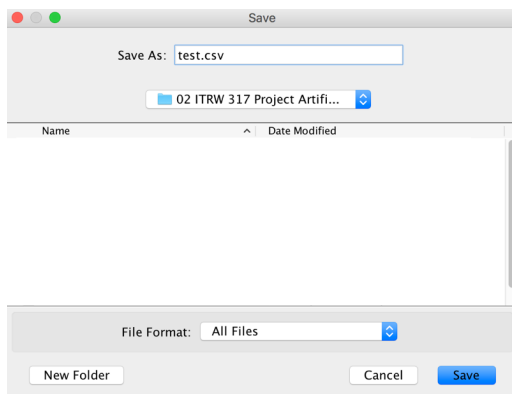
Figure 2: Load game state.



#### - **Game -> Save Game State**

This feature can be used by clicking on the “Game” dropdown list in the menu bar, followed by clicking on the “Save Game State” menu item in the “Game” dropdown list. This will open a dialog window where the end-user can browse to a specific location and save the current state of the game as a .csv file. The user must enter the .csv file extension at the end of the file name. Refer to *Figure 5*.

Figure 4: Save game state.



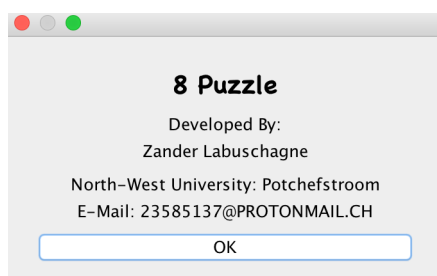
#### - **Exit**

This is a mandatory feature included in all software applications. This exits the game without saving.

#### - **About**

This is just a menu item on the menu bar to view the details of the developer.

Figure 6: About.



#### - **Help**

Another mandatory feature to improve the user experience by answering the user’s questions about the game.

#### - **AI -> Animated Solve**

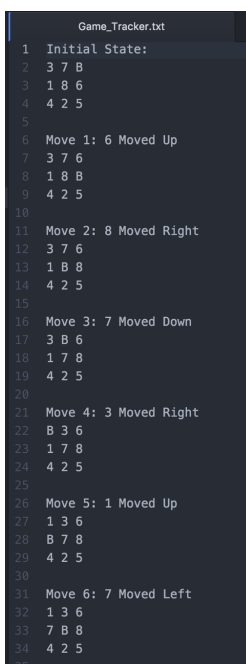
This feature is not active yet and will be included in part 2. The feature can be found under the AI menu item inside the menu bar. When this is activated the current game state will be solved in the least possible moves with the move animation effect. This is done by using artificial intelligence.

### - AI -> Quick Solve

This feature is not active yet and will be included in part 2. The feature can be found under the AI menu item inside the menu bar. When this is activated the current game state will be solved in the least possible moves without the move animation effect to spare time.

### - Game Tracker

8 Puzzle keeps track of all the moves made in the current game, the moves made are saved in a text(.txt) file inside the game root folder. This may be used to analyse the game play. Refer to *Figure 7*. **Warning:** *Make a backup of the game tracker file if you want keep the history before loading/starting new game, otherwise the game tracker file will get overwritten and the information will be lost forever. Do not try to view the file while the game is running, rather make a backup when the game has exited and BEFORE the game is launched again.*



```
Game_Tracker.txt
1 Initial State:
2 3 7 8
3 1 8 6
4 4 2 5
5
6 Move 1: 6 Moved Up
7 3 7 6
8 1 8 8
9 4 2 5
10
11 Move 2: 8 Moved Right
12 3 7 6
13 1 8 8
14 4 2 5
15
16 Move 3: 7 Moved Down
17 3 8 6
18 1 7 8
19 4 2 5
20
21 Move 4: 3 Moved Right
22 8 3 6
23 1 7 8
24 4 2 5
25
26 Move 5: 1 Moved Up
27 1 3 6
28 8 7 8
29 4 2 5
30
31 Move 6: 7 Moved Left
32 1 3 6
33 7 8 8
34 4 2 5
35
```

Figure 7: Game Tracker.

## 3.3. Technical Support

Support is only provided for UNIX-like systems. The developer can be contacted at: [23585137@PROTONMAIL.CH](mailto:23585137@PROTONMAIL.CH)

The North-West University: Potchefstroom Campus holds ownership rights over this software.

## 3.4. End User Licence Agreement

This software is open source and free to modify but may not be sold commercially. North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus holds ownership rights to this software. This software was developed by Zander Labuschagne, student at North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. The developer may be contacted for support on UNIX-like systems, do not bother him with Microsoft problems.

This software was made possible by the following five rules:

1. Never give up on anything.
2. Do what you love no matter who, no matter what.

- ## References

du Doit, J.V. 2016. Artificial Intelligence. Potchefstroom: NWU, Potchefstroom Campus. (Study Guide ITRW 317 PEC).

## Appendix A: Source Code

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