= Spindizzy (video game) =

 Spindizzy is an isometric computer game released for several 8 @-@ bit home computer formats in 1986 by Electric Dreams Software . It features action and puzzle game elements . Players must navigate a series of screens to explore a landscape suspended in a dimensional space . Development was headed by Paul Shirley , who drew inspiration from Ultimate Play The Game games that feature an isometric projection .
 The game was successful in the United Kingdom and was well received by the video game press . Reviewers praised its visuals and design , but criticized its audio . Similarities were drawn to Marble Madness , which was released in arcades two years earlier . Spindizzy was followed by a 1990s sequel titled Spindizzy Worlds .

 = = Gameplay = =

 Spindizzy is an action and puzzle game played from an isometric perspective . Players can view the playing field from four angles , and rotate between them . The game takes place in a fictional landscape of interconnected stages suspended in a dimensional space . The player controls a probe called a Gyroscopic Environmental Reconnaissance And Land @-@ Mapping Device (GERALD) , via keyboard commands or a joystick . The craft is able to transform ? and modify its mobility as a result ? between three configurations : a ball , an inverted square pyramid , and a gyroscope . Players navigate the probe through the stages to explore the world within a time limit . The time limit can be extended by collecting power jewels scattered through the world and is decreased by falling off a stage . Stages feature ramps , corridors , and other obstacles that hinder the player from quickly traversing them . The game ends when time expires or the world is completely explored .

 = = Development and release = =

 Spindizzy was developed by Paul Shirley of British video game developer Electric Dreams Software . He was primarily inspired by Ultimate Play The Game games that feature an isometric projection , but was also influenced by the gameplay of the 1984 arcade game Marble Madness . Shirley created an interpreted script to generate the game 's levels . The script allowed him to design a large number of stages using 11KB of storage . The game was originally released for the Commodore 64 and Amstrad CPC . It was later ported to Atari 8 @-@ bit , ZX Spectrum , and Apple II computers . Spindizzy cartridges were promoted as prizes in magazine contests upon its release . American video game company Activision published the game in the United States as part of its " Electric Dreams " series . John Sanderson programmed the Apple II version ; Shirley was unaware of the port 's existence until the mid @-@ 1990s . Spindizzy was later re @-@ released as part of an Activision compilation . The company sold Spindizzy 's compilation rights not long after obtaining them , which reduced the amount of royalties to Shirley and Electric Dreams . Shirley eventually severed the contract with Activision , citing late royalty payments among other actions he disagreed with .

 = = Reception and legacy = =

 Spindizzy sold well in the United Kingdom . Shirley described the game 's marketing life as short and attributed that to Activision 's business practices . James Hague of Dadgum Games commented that Spindizzy could have been an " all @-@ time classic " had it received a proper marketing campaign . The game was well received by video game journalists upon its release . Zzap ! 64 awarded Spindizzy a Gold Medal . Tony Hetherington of Computer Gamer listed it as one of the essential Spectrum titles of 1986 .
 Praise from reviewers focused on the game 's visuals and design , while criticism focused on the audio . Three of Zzap ! 64 's reviewers ? Julian Rignall , Gary Liddon , and Gary Penn ? called the graphics " amazing " , well @-@ executed , and " varied " ; but they described the audio as sparse .

Rignall and Penn complimented the challenging gameplay and commented that its addictiveness outweighed any frustration experienced while playing . The three summarized by urging readers to purchase the game . Computer Gamer reviewer Mike Roberts praised Spindizzy 's gameplay , but mentioned that the screen 's orientation can require a period of adjustment , particularly when using a joystick . Crash 's reviewer called Spindizzy " one of the most addictive " ZX Spectrum games , noting its innovative use of shape changing , multiple view angles , and speed control . The audio was seen as lacking compared to the rest of the game , but was still described as good . Phil South of Your Sinclair gave the game high marks for graphics , playability , value for money , and addictiveness . He praised the ability to change viewpoints and the realistic movements of the character sprite . He also lauded the speed and quality of the graphics .

More than a decade later , reviews still praised the game . Allgame editor Ryan Glover called Spindizzy an " innovative puzzler " that prompts players to fully explore it . Saying that the game successfully mixed infuriating moments with brilliant design , Darran Jones of Retro Gamer called Spindizzy a " timeless classic " . The magazine rated Spindizzy the second best game with an isometric perspective , citing its presentation and stage designs . Reviewers drew comparisons to Marble Madness , which was ported to home platforms the same year . Roberts called Spindizzy the " best ' marble ' game yet " , and Charles Ardai of Computer Gaming World called it " a thoroughly enjoyable game " superior to Marble Madness . South described Spindizzy as the " closest thing yet to Marble Madness " on the ZX Spectrum , while Liddon said that any similarities to Marble Madness were coincidental . Many publications commented that the game was obviously inspired by Marble Madness . Over 25 years after its release , Retro Gamer called the game " intensely devious and addictive " and added that " Spindizzy 's only enemy was yourself " .

Spindizzy 's isometric design partially inspired Glenn Corpes during the development of the 1989 title Populous . Activision released a sequel titled Spindizzy Worlds for Amiga and Atari ST computers in 1990 . The game features similar gameplay , but improved graphics and larger playing fields . It was later ported to the Super Nintendo Entertainment System by ASCII , which Shirley disapproved of and considered it a " disaster " . He took legal action over the span of several years to obtain royalty information and payments .