

## = Bubbles ( video game ) =

Bubbles is an arcade video game developed by Williams Electronics and released in 1982 . The player uses a joystick to control a bubble in a kitchen sink . The object is to progress through levels by cleaning the sink while avoiding enemies . The game received a mixed reception from critics .

Development was handled by John Kotlarik and Python Anghelo . Kotlarik wanted to create a non @-@ violent game inspired by Pac @-@ Man . Anghelo designed the game 's artwork and scenario as well as a special plastic cabinet that saw limited use . Bubbles was not ported to any contemporary systems , but was later released as a web @-@ based version and on home consoles as part of arcade compilations .

## = = Gameplay = =

Bubbles is an action game with puzzle elements where the player controls the protagonist , a soap bubble , from a top @-@ down perspective . The object is to clean a kitchen sink by maneuvering over ants , crumbs , and grease spots to absorb them before they slide into the drain . As the bubble absorbs more objects , it grows in size , eventually acquiring first eyes and then a smiling mouth . At the same time , sponges and scrub brushes slowly move around the sink , cleaning it on their own in competition with the player . Touching either of these enemies costs a player one life unless the bubble is large enough to have a complete face . In this case , the enemy will be knocked away and the bubble will shrink . Sponges and brushes can be knocked into the drain for bonus points , eliminating them from play . Two other enemies in the sink are stationary razor blades and roaches that crawl out of the drain . Contact with a blade is always fatal , while the bubble can safely touch the roach only while carrying a broom , which will kill the roach with one hit . The broom can be acquired by running over a cleaning lady who appears in the sink from time to time .

A level ends when all of the point @-@ scoring objects are gone - either lost down the drain , cleaned by sponges / brushes , eaten by roaches , or absorbed by the bubble . At this point , if the bubble is large enough to have a complete face , the player moves on to the next level ; otherwise , one life is lost and the level must be replayed . In addition , whenever the bubble has a face , the drain flashes green , giving the player a chance to enter it and skip the next level . Entering the drain while the bubble is too small costs one life .

## = = Development = =

The game features monaural sound and pixel graphics on a 19 inch CRT monitor . The initial concept was conceived by John Kotlarik , who aimed to create a non @-@ violent game . Inspired by Pac @-@ Man , he envisioned similar gameplay in an open playing field rather than in a maze . Python Anghelo furthered the concept by creating artwork and a scenario . Kotlarik designed the protagonist to have fluid movement like it was traveling on a slick surface . The control scheme allows the digital input to operate similar to an analogue one . He programmed the bubble to accelerate in the direction the joystick is held . Once the joystick returns to its neutral position , the bubble will coast as the velocity slowly decreases . Anghelo designed the artwork for the wooden cabinets as well as a new cylindrical , plastic cabinet . Gary Berge , a mechanical engineer , created the new cabinets with a rotational molding process .

## = = Reception and legacy = =

The game received a mixed reception from critics . Author John Sellers listed it among the weirder arcade games released . Clare Edgeley of Computer and Video Games echoed similar statements . She criticized the game , stating that the constant blue background was dull and the game lacked longevity . Retro Gamer 's Darran Jones described the game as engrossing and obscure . He also expressed disappointment that few people remember it . Brett Alan Weiss of AllGame called Bubbles a slightly underrated game . He stated that while it lacked excitement , its gameplay was

enjoyable . Weiss further commented that the control scheme was unique for its time , and that the number of on @-@ screen objects moving smoothly was impressive .

The game was later remade for different platforms . In 2000 , a web @-@ based version of Bubbles , along with nine other classic arcade games , was published on Shockwave.com. Four years later , Midway Games also launched a website featuring the Shockwave versions . Williams Electronics included Bubbles in several of its arcade compilations : the 1996 Williams Arcade 's Greatest Hits , the 2000 Midway 's Greatest Arcade Hits ( Dreamcast version only ) , the 2003 Midway Arcade Treasures , and the 2012 Midway Arcade Origins .

Bubbles arcade cabinets have varying degrees of rarity . The cocktail and cabaret are the rarest , followed by the plastic and upright versions ; the plastic models are more valuable among collectors . Though the plastic cabinets were very durable , they would shrink over time , sometimes causing the device to become inoperable . Williams Electronics used this cabinet for only one other game , Blaster .