

Tetris

- That's because copyright law doesn't actually protect the basic idea and underlying rules of a game, which need a duly filed and approved patent to be locked down
- The copyright on a game only protects the "expression" of those rules, which usually covers things like character art, music and sound effects
- The defense's main argument, instead, was that the things it copied—everything from the shape and color of the blocks and the way that they rotate to the dimensions of the playfield—were actually integral to the underlying rules of the game, and therefore not subject to copyright protection.
- Definition of Tetris: Tetris is a puzzle game where a user manipulates pieces composed of square blocks, each made into a different geometric shape, that fall from the top of the game board to the bottom where the pieces accumulate. The user is given a new piece after the current one reaches the bottom of the available game space. While a piece is falling, the user rotates it in order to fit it in with the accumulated pieces. The object of the puzzle is to fill all spaces along a horizontal line. If that is accomplished, the line is erased, points are earned, and more of the game board is available for play. But if the pieces accumulate and reach the top of the screen, then the game is over. These then are the general, abstract ideas underlying Tetris and cannot be protected by copyright nor can expressive elements that are inseparable from them.
- The dimensions of the playing field [20 squares high by ten squares wide].
- The display of "garbage" lines [the random junk that can optionally appear at the start of a game].
- The appearance of "ghost" or shadow pieces [which highlight where a piece is going to land].
- The display of the next piece to fall.
- The change in color of the pieces when they lock with the accumulated pieces.
- The appearance of squares automatically filling in the game board when the game is over.
- By defining the "idea" of Tetris at such a high level (as "games with falling, rotatable blocks that disappear when arranged in lines"), Schechter notes that the judge basically ensured that the court would be able to identify many lower-level details that made Tetris protectable
- If all of their shapes were five blocks, and the grid had different dimensions, and the blocks weren't practically identically styled, I'm not sure we get to an infringement finding,
- <https://arstechnica.com/gaming/2012/06/defining-tetris-how-courts-judge-gaming-clones/>

2048

- “If you register a trademark, you have legal grounds to prevent others from unpermitted use of your trademark with their product.”
- “trademark is only relevant to clones if:
 - The original game has a trademark AND
 - The clone is attempting to make use of the trademark (I.E. use it as part of their branding) without permission.”
- “It would appear they haven't successfully maintained control of 2048 as a trademark”
- A trademark is a word, symbol, or combination that identifies the source of a good or service. Once acquired, a trademark gives the owner exclusive rights to the trademark usage with respect to certain goods or services.
- Trademark infringement is improper or unauthorized use of an identical or similar trademark in a way that is likely to cause confusion as to the source of that product.
- <https://gamedev.stackexchange.com/questions/152806/is-2048-a-registered-trademark>
- <https://trademarks.justia.com/865/87/2048-86587551.html>