

osu!  
monthly

issue #5

osu!stream is here!  
extensive interview with peppy  
community and diversity  
around the world | collaborations | forum gaming

# osu!monthly

## August 2011 Edition

### Issue 5

#### <http://osu.ppy.sh>

Layout/Design based on osu!stream,  
by Koko Ban and peppy

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**What's this?**  
You may have noticed these purple boxes that are laid throughout this month's newsletter. What exactly is this mysterious box?  
  
Thanks to the efforts of our editor Omega, the team at osu!monthly decided to spread the whole newsletter with delightful tips in creating better Easy/Normal maps! Isn't that awesome?

### The results are in!

It was a close call, but the winner is Blue Army! Many thanks to those who participated in the poll. Stay tuned for Blue Army at a BSS near you.



### Important Links



Interested in joining the osu!monthly staff? [Submit an application](#).  
Have a suggestion to improve the newsletter? [We'd like to hear from you](#).  
How about constructive criticism? [We'd like to hear about that too!](#)  
An alternate listing of the osu!monthly staff is located [here](#).  
Submit questions to [Lybydose](#) for next edition's interview! Click [here](#) for the submission form.  
Submit your answers to the crossword using this form, [here](#). A printable version of the crossword is located [here](#).  
Submit your captions for the Caption Contest [here](#).

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Think you've seen **everything** osu! has to offer? Bummed you **can't** bring the rhythm to your **iPad**? Not anymore! **osu!stream**, a rhythm game application for **touch-screen mobile platforms**, recently debuted in Apple's App Store, **changing the world of osu!** as we know it. Let's have a quick look at what osu!stream is all about.

No matter what your **skill level** is, osu!stream **always** lets you enjoy as much challenge as you can handle. In Stream Mode, levels **change before your eyes** as their difficulty **switches** dynamically between three "streams" to match your performance. Is the Normal stream too simple for you? You get moved up to **Hard!** Hard proves too tough to handle? Back to **Normal** you go! Newcomers can wet their feet with **Easy Mode**, where they can practice on a song's Easy stream without the fear of failing. Rhythm veterans can sink their teeth into Expert Mode, where **all the stops are pulled!**

You're familiar with tapping, sliding and spinning, but what about **holding**? Long requested by **many**, Hold Notes finally make their **debut** in osu!stream. Merely pressing the screen sounds simple enough, but what if you have to **keep one hand still while the dances around the field**, only to have the situation **reversed** right after? A quick mind and **swift** hands are required to survive this new element. **But that's not all!** The **multi-touch** capabilities of the platforms osu!stream has been designed for allows **two objects** to be placed at the same time, pushing your coordination skills to the **limit!**

osu!stream features **original** work and **remixes** from artists such as [Amane](#), [Souleye](#), and [Bangjung](#), as well as our own [tieff](#) and [Natteke](#). A **dedicated** team of experienced osu! beatmappers has created stages that **compliment** the songs and game mechanics to offer a **professional** rhythm game experience. **New** songs will be released every month, both as **free** and **purchasable** song packs. This is **just the beginning**, however. There's plenty **more** improvements and additions to come, including **support for other mobile platforms**!



A few days ago, osu! got itself a baby brother: osu!stream, an application for multi-touch mobile platforms which, while similar to osu!, offers a distinct rhythm game experience.

The osu!monthly got in touch with peppy, developer of osu! and osu!stream, to find out more about this latest addition to the world of osu!.

**Let's start with an obvious question about osu!stream's origins. When and how did the idea to make an osu!-like mobile app come about?**

I actually started planning about a year ago. It felt like a natural progression to make, considering the availability of multi-touch devices these days. The iPad's release was a definite wake-up call, too. There was also a post in the [osu! fan-art thread by a user called Koko Ban](#), revealing this mysterious game called "osu! stream" with a "COMING SOON" blurb. I really liked the design and wanted to use it for something.

**Where did the idea of "streams" come from?**

A similar mechanic is used in some stages of the Taiko games, so that was one source of inspiration. The name comes from Koko Ban's drawing.

**Would you say that the experience gained from coding and maintaining osu! helped in the development of osu!stream? Conversely, did creating osu!stream lead to any breakthroughs regarding osu!?**

It's true that I wouldn't have been able to make osu!stream so awesome without the experience I've gained from writing osu!. However, I set off to write osu!stream from scratch, to correct all the wrongs that have built up over the years of maintaining and adding new features to osu!. Generally, after many years of having a live product you need to rewrite it in order to keep things fresh and in order. As a result, osu!stream is actually a completely fresh system. It is so much more lean and clean (code-wise) than osu! that I can't explain in words. Looking back at osu! now makes me want to add all the improvements in, which is something I hope to do when I have the time!

**Speaking of osu! improvements, do you think that multiple streams and held notes, the original game play aspects of osu!stream, could be integrated into osu!?**

Streams are probably best left out, as they require a huge amount of thought when mapping. You have to consider every single point where a map could switch and make sure it does so in a readable way. Hold notes are something I want to see in osu!. This will definitely happen. They can be added with minimal effort and I will make sure you guys see them in osu! as an alternative to super-short sliders as soon as possible. Multi-touch is obviously not so possible given hardware constraints, though.

Naturally, the osu! community is abuzz regarding this new facet of osu!. Is there any way they can help besides downloading and playing the game? For example, do you intend to make mapping of osu!stream stages a more public procedure, with maps being submitted, modded and ultimately accepted into osu!stream? As always, if anyone has anything they believe they can offer, I'm all ears (shoot me an e-mail at [pe@ppy.sh](mailto:pe@ppy.sh)). For instance, if you or a friend composes music that is mappable, we could definitely work something out! As for mapping, I am currently choosing mappers myself and maintaining a small team to ensure high quality. That said, if you think you could make some great maps and want to join us, I will gradually be accepting more mappers. The standards will be very high, though.

**Does the commercialisation of osu! in the form of a mobile app mean that the PC version will remain wholly free-to-play? What about making more apps, like a Catch the Beat one?**

Well firstly, osu!stream is a completely separate entity from osu! and I intend to keep it that way forever. As for making CtB or Taiko-style games...I never actually considered doing this, but now that the infrastructure is in place, this would easily be possible. If there is demand and I find the time, I don't see why not.

**osu! has changed a lot over the years. What can we expect in the future of osu!stream? A multiplayer mode? Skins? Mods?**

Multiplayer is near-definite. And yes, mods will be added (I have some really interesting concepts for mods on touch platforms!). I would also like to add more skinned elements to songs and packs, but I need a bit more framework and optimisations in order to get this happening across all devices. Packs are served in a way that lets them be updated after initial download/purchase, so old packs may get face-lifts when new features are introduced, as well.

**A developing trend in gaming has content released periodically as downloadable packages, rather than the "pay once for a full game" approach we've been used to. Furthermore, casual games, especially in the form of mobile apps, have been gaining ground. What are your views on this?**

It seems to be a proven model. Personally, as long as the price is fair, I don't mind what payment approach a game uses. At the end of the day, as long as it isn't used as a ploy to charge more than otherwise possible in a single payment, I don't see this shift being a problem. This is exactly how I plan on going forward with osu!stream -- both with music and some new features. Of course, there will also be new free content released as well, and features like multiplayer will remain free.

**We've already seen the iOS release, but when will Android and Windows Mobile users get their thumbs on the game?**

Android release is planned for some time this month. Keep in mind that due to the huge range of Android devices out there, we probably cannot support them all initially. Depending on demand, support will increase as time passes. As for Windows Mobile, I do have it tentatively planned, but that, too depends on demand.



# interview with DerekkU

Written by: [Starrodkirby86](#)

This interview was conducted before the removal of the "Community Manager" title. However, his role remains unchanged. Only the namesake is removed.

This month, our newsletter interviews Derekku, a longtime member of the osu! staff and current Community Manager, whose contributions include spearheading the initiative for updating the ranking criteria of beatmaps.

## Let's start off with the basics. Can you tell us what your role of "Community Manager" entails?

In a nutshell, I would say that I mainly do a lot of forum and IRC moderation. I also have many administrative and back-end duties that relieve stress and workload from peppy. In addition, I set standards, guidelines, and rules for the community, including regular players, the BAT, and GMT.

## What are some of the administrative or moderating duties you've done since your debut?

A few of my regular administrative duties include: Taking permanent action with troublemakers, aiding with suspicious accounts, and removing inappropriate or otherwise offensive avatars.

## Do these situations get a bit stressful, especially when time is a major factor for certain cases?

I wouldn't say that it's stressful 100% of the time, but there definitely is a great deal of stress on a daily basis. It's definitely not an easy or laid-back job!

## Sounds like #bat has their hands full!

Ha ha, we sure do! There's often a situation with a user causing trouble or a channel running amok. However, we still get a lot of downtime, which allows us to chat about osu! development and have friendly discussions as well!

## Indeed! Now, last month, you released a near-final version of the New Rules. Could you first enlighten us on what this exactly is?

They are updated mapping rules and guidelines to replace the existing (and outdated) set that has been used since the beginning of osu!. Many unwritten "rules" have been followed by mappers and modders alike for years, but now there is finally a visual document for everyone to follow.

## In that first release, there seem to have been controversies over wording, leniency, and even towards some of the rules themselves! What happened in response to that?

Since beatmapping plays such a huge role in the community, the BAT/GMT expected there to be a lot of disagreement. However, I was blown away by the vast amount of feedback within only a few hours. Thus, we realized that community input needed to be organized much better, and therefore a subforum was created to house such discussions.

## One thing to note though; why is the subforum set to read-only for the public?

We wanted to keep issues organized and make necessary amendments, but there was no reason to have private discussion when the rules had already been made public days before.

## How about the public's feedback? Some people perceived this read-only forum as a slap in the face, due to the inability to give input on a rule they want to talk about.

It wouldn't make much sense to start from square one with discussion, and thus we are working on making obvious or otherwise necessary changes. Then, the community will have a much more solid foundation to stand on for discussion!

It seems that the community is rather polarized regarding the New Rules. We have one side preferring rules, stressing that a lack of them would result in too many violations, inconsistencies, technical errors, and a possible overall drop in map quality. However, we have the opposite side supporting guidelines, noting that an onslaught of rules limits creativity and stalls any progress in the growth of beatmapping. How would you address this matter? Are there any goals and aspirations you have in regards to this?

There always needs to be a balance between guidelines and rules, and it just depends on where we want osu! to go (with regard to beatmapping). As time goes by, we create or improve upon standards, and thus overall beatmap quality increases. This is why the New Rules are so important for osu! and why community input will be crucial to their development. Our goals are to try and treat every beatmap with the same set of standards, and to allow both creativity and map quality to flourish!

## Do you think anything will change in mapping and modding once the New Rules officially roll around?

Since most of the new rules have already been followed for quite some time, there shouldn't be any radical changes. However, there are a few important changes that will need to be acknowledged by mappers and modders alike.

## Such as?

Mainly difficulty spread changes, minimum/maximum drain time for songs, and technical changes such as using uninherited sections appropriately.

## Ah! What do you like to do in your spare time on osu!?

I'm not much of a mapper, but I enjoy playing osu!standard and modding others' beatmaps!

## Any favorite beatmaps or mappers?

I have way too many beatmaps that I love, but a couple of my favorite mappers are Krisom and Gonzvlo. Their maps have the symmetry, creativity, and overall aspects of fun that have me coming back time and time again to replay them!

## Definitely swell mappers. Well, Derek, it was nice interviewing you! Anything you'd like to say before we call it a day?

Remember that osu! is, at its core, a game, and at the end of the day, the main goal should be to just have fun!

Next month we'll be interviewing Lybydose! Submit your questions [here](#).



Intuition plays a big part in making your map easier. An intuitive map is one where all the movements the player has to take follow a simple, somewhat easy to predict pattern. One of the things that can make a map more intuitive is reasonable spacing. No sudden changes of direction in object placement, providing ample time before and after spinners are other things that help, too! If a player can play the map by intuition, they will be able to do it and still have fun.



# AROUND THE WORLD PROJECT: OCEANIA

**WRITTEN BY: POISONCHAN**

Perhaps one of the greatest things about osu! is how it brings together people from all around the world. At the time of writing, the site lists active players from 169 different countries or territories, there's 17 language-specific chat channels, an equal number of languages the osu! menus can be displayed in, 16 language-specific subforums and 12 translations of the FAQ in languages other than English. One can just press F9 in osu and bring up the World Map to see red dots all over the place.

To celebrate the geographical, ethnic and cultural diversity of osu!'s player base, we've launched the Around The World Project! Each month, this new feature of our newsletter will travel to different countries and interview the locals about their lives and how they relate to osu!. We hope you'll find it as fun and intriguing as we expect it to be!

We'll kick things off with the birthplace of osu!, Australia, and then round up our focus on Oceania with a quick visit to New Zealand. All aboard!



Name: Azure Kyte  
Age: 19  
Occupation: Help Desk Support Advisor

**How did you find out about osu!?**  
I was looking for games that were free to play on XFire back in 2009. I found osu! and never really left.

**Has osu! affected you in real life? If so, how?**  
I think, for the most part, it allows me to escape from whatever it is I do in the real world. The community is rather excellent, which has really helped me stay here for so long.

**What do you like the most about your country? What do you like the least?**  
I like Australian weather the most. Especially in the tropics. You can go from sunlight to pouring rain within five minutes, at times. At the moment, I'm...not really sure what I like least about Australia.

**What would you consider one of the most unique aspects of your country?**  
The wildlife. Where else would you see kangaroos and wombats?

**TIP 2**

**Make sure your map follows an obvious beat that matches the song's tempo.** Also, if you suddenly jump from the vocals to the instrumentals, newbies will almost certainly miss. If you do that, provide a warning if at all possible. (But be careful, your warning could be more confusing than not having one at all, in which case you should not include it.)



Name: NyaaKoneko  
Age: 24  
Occupation: Caretaker

**How did you find out about osu!?**  
Tian/Decay showed it to me.

**Do you remember the first map you played? Why did you choose it?**  
I think my first map was Bad Apple and it was just 'cause I was in multiplayer.



of people that don't know how to drive properly on the roads and my sister... oh, wait...

**Have you ever met someone from osu! in real life?**  
First person I met in real life would be Nyaa-Koneko. Fun and interesting girl to talk to. Then after that I met Dean, Lilac, and a few more. One person I would love to see is saymun. Shy guy.

**What is the best thing about your work?**  
In the bakery I work at, I'd say the best thing is the amount of fun I have.

**What do you like the most about your country? What do you like the least?**  
I like how carefree and lazy it is. And I like my sister too... My dislikes, though, are the amount

**What do you like the most about your country? What do you like the least?**

I like that we have a westernised culture and free choice on who we want to be, but I dislike a lot of what comes with that as well. I wish we had more of a Japanese culture, where it would feel safer to walk around and most likely not get stabbed.

**What is the best thing about your school/work?**  
I don't go to school and I don't work so that is the best thing ever, I just do what I want.



Name: deadbeat  
Age: 20  
Occupation: Information Technology

**How did you find out about osu!?**  
My friend bob\_the\_cat showed it to me.

**Has osu! affected you in real life? If so, how?**

I don't notice small changes over time, but if I had to guess, then yeah. I do walk down the street patting my legs to the beat of the song that's playing on my headphones.

**Do you like cooking?**  
I don't mind cooking. Plus, it's a good skill to have. Stir-fry, Spaghetti Bol, steak, curry, whatever I feel like. I eat everything!

All caricatures by *Chazbo*

# IT'S ALL FUN AND GAMES

**WRITTEN BY: Wojjan**

One of the things that sets osu! apart from other rhythm games is the fundamental connection between game-play and community. Games like Stepmania and SpinItUp! lack one very important feature when it comes to their custom stages: the endless, arduous correction they receive from modders until the beatmap is as good as possible. Our community is, in that regard, extremely capable. The close way the game and the community interlace has also been illustrated in osu!monthly and its articles.

This bustling hive of users has helped turn osu! into the thoroughly impressive [Elite Beat Agents](#) simulator it is today, but what happens when they turn their attention to other games? One answer to this question can be found in the [Forum Games](#) section, where you can join all the people you know from the game in some off-osu! fun!

## Paranoia meets Cops and Robbers

First off, I'd like to get into a tradition that has lived in our forums since Off-Topic was still called Forum Games/Random, and has experienced a recent renaissance with the return of some old forumgoers. I'm talking about [Mafia](#), that ageless, classic game where you try to answer the question so many fans of mystery novels have pondered before: Whodunnit?

The game has a very simple premise: each "night", the Mafia, a small, informed minority, kills a player. Each "day", the town citizens, the uninformed majority among which the Mafia is hiding, lynches a player by majority vote. Who do you think is part of the Mafia? Huh, that person? No, I think you just want to get rid of them because they voted against you some time before. Why would you do that? You only say that so I'd start doubting you!

Paranoid players call each other out. Of course, without a certain aid, the job of finding the mobsters is mainly guesswork. There's an almost endless list of auxiliary roles to choose from, each with a unique power. To flossick in the pool of roles for a moment: there's cops, doctors, bombs, trackers, watchers, jailers, bodyguards, vigilantes, celebrities, maidens, gunsmiths, dreamers, tree stumps, bulletproofs, actors, mayors, millers, and many, many more. Each of these roles has a unique strategy to learn and work with.

This is where Mafia runs into problems: while it has the potential to be a very fun game, it only starts being so once you get the gist of how to play it. In communities familiar with the game – and with the amount of sessions that have already taken place, our forum is certainly turning into one – you often get ripped into for not knowing how to play. This creates a strange [Catch-22](#) of everlasting newbie-hood. As much as you like to read up on roles and strategies and what have you (there's an [entire wiki](#) dedicated to the game for those interested), you can't become a good player unless you get some experience. But without having played the game often, you're guaranteed to screw up somewhere, effectively becoming the game's chew toy. More often than not, people get lynched just for not knowing how the game truly works.

When stripped to its core, I'd say Mafia is a game for the elite. There's people who know how to play, and people who don't. And with every addition and new way to play that gets discovered, the gap between these two factions widens.

## Let's see who's behind door number one...

The next pastime I'd like to tackle is a game hosted by Quaraezha, [the Picture Guessing Game](#). Again, the premise is easy to explain. Quaraezha hides a character from any work of fiction (or, in rare cases, reality) behind a certain kind of filter, and from there on gives hints to the players. First to guess which character is in the picture wins the round.

This game is as much fun as playing Twenty Questions with a robot, if you were the one asking the questions. It serves its purpose as a forum game, but only alongside threads like "[The counting game](#)" or "[A total of X ranked plays!](#)". In the end, there's only two possible outcomes: sometimes you're familiar with the character, sometimes you're not.

Again, this point is where the Mafia issue arises. The game's flaw, which ends up dragging the game to a halt for some players, is the fact that only one person is picking the images. Naturally, Quaraezha can't pick anyone he doesn't know and/or remember. The only characters that will ever make it in the game is ones he's familiar with, so the point of the game soon devolves into "have your hobbies be the closest match to Quaraezha's." Currently the game is getting dominated by a player called naptime, who seems to fit that description the best.

Another major issue lies in the hint system. Most of the pictures Quaraezha posts, especially in the pixelated rounds, are so indecipherable that you have to rely on hints to solve the puzzle at times, which naturally begs the question of why the picture is even there in the first place. If I could suggest an improvement, I'd comment on the concord between picture and game. Instead of hints about the characters, have the pixelated images get a gradually finer grid, or make the camera zoom out in the close-up rounds.

Overall, this game seems to have started off okay, but got stuck in gear. It hasn't improved and evolved as much as the games of Mafia we play on the forums. I think the game's system has to morph and evolve in order to live up to its name and revitalise the players' interest.

PICTURE NO. 11 PICTURE NO. 11



An example of the Picture Guessing Game. As rounds continue, the pictures become harder.

**TIP 3**

**Spacing should be consistent.** You've probably heard this before in more than one place, but it's important to impress on you that on maps aimed towards beginners, you should never make a spacing that changes too often for newbies to be able to read it.

# OSU!MONTHLY COLLAGE COVER —ANSWERS—

## Are lalas stupid?

Finally, we have the osu! Idol series. Those of you who have been around a bit longer may recall the blast everyone had with the first in the series: everyone got together, sang songs, and had a great time, which was to be expected of karaoke, but we also discovered some incredible singing voices! If only we knew back when we attempted the osu! Kumikyoku!

Currently the series is at its fourth installment, but when checking the current edition, something struck me as odd. The first game seemed much blither than its successors, and was fun to player and spectator alike. Interest has mushroomed since then. With more competitors, however, judges became sec, harsh and intolerant. Submissions got released, but in spoilerboxes, while criticism flourished in posh spreadsheets. The games grew much more closed-circle, and with less levity to them. osu! Idol mutated into a veritable strife, a far cry from the party game we knew it all to have been from the start.

Karaoke is known to be more about the people you sing with than the songs you sing. And in that sense, osu! Idol strayed from the path of amusement.

## Game on!

That concludes a brief desultory look at the osu! community's three most prominent forum games. But don't let your search end there! In the midst of more intense contests, there's still room in the subsubforum for daisy chains like "The BAN game" or even plain old word association. Promising new games are also gearing up all the time, like (at the time of writing) Kingdom Royale or vytalibus' intriguing parody on the Death Note series. No game will earn its wings by concept alone, however. As varied as they might be, forum games have one constant. They need players, like you. Yeah, you. If anything you read just now caught your attention, head over to the Forum Games section. All those amazing people you know from osu! are ready to play with you!

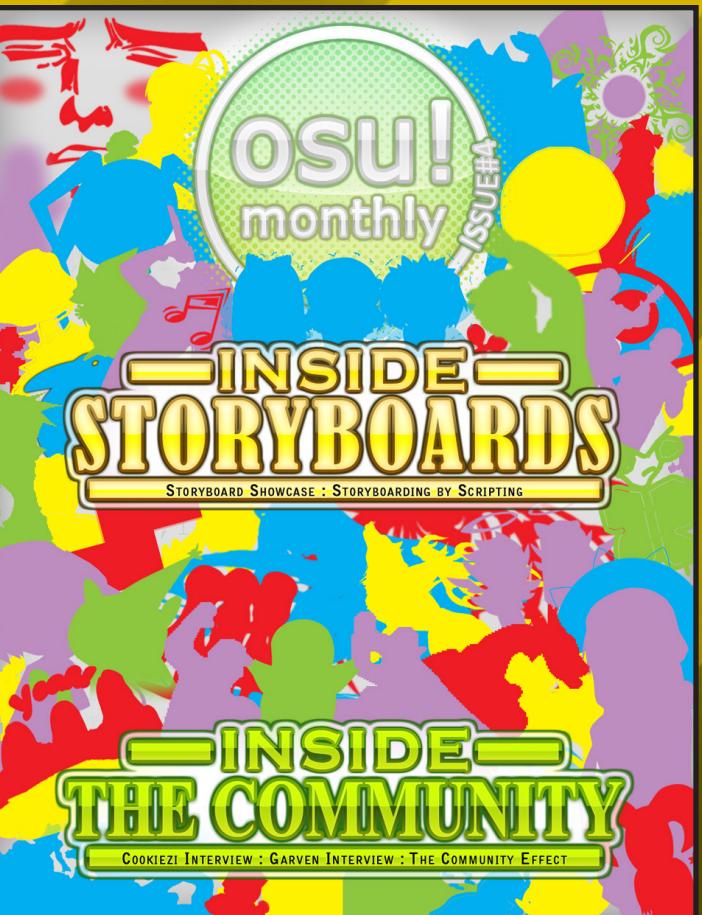
*The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and not necessarily those of the osu!monthly staff.*

## TIP 4

### Do not make complex patterns of sliders and notes.

A cross, a star, or a series of sliders overlapping in the middle. Those are examples of patterns that you might want to avoid. In general, players are comfortable playing when they can quickly make a mind map of where to move the cursor next until the end of the combo. If you manage to not violate this, you will be praised for having such a smoothly flowing map in no time.

Here comes the answers to last month's collage cover! Each element is color coded to their respective map. The answers are in order from left-to-right, starting from the top. You can view the original cover [here](#).



## Hall of Fame



Beuchi-chan,  
Derekku  
54



ErufenRito, Gonzvlo, vivere - 44  
Charles445, ouranhshc - 43  
Card N'FoRcE - 40  
NoHlitter - 37

- 1: ISAJI - Yaranaika
- 2: IOSYS feat 3L - Miracle-Hinade
- 3: IOSYS - Danzai Yamaxanadu
- 4: Sound Horizon - Utsukushiki Mono
- 5: Daft Punk - Technologic
- 6: Yukari Hashimoto - Lost My Pieces
- 7: Yuka Tsujiyoko - Shy Guy's Toybox
- 8: The O.C. Supertones - I Can Be Your Friend
- 9: Federica Felini - Je T'aime
- 10: ZUN - Reach for the Moon, Immortal Smoke
- 11: Nightcore - Jump Jump
- 12: Nintendo - Super Mario Bros Medley
- 13: Mika - Big Girl (You Are Beautiful)
- 14: Nico Nico Douga - Koishi and Okuu of the Sprite Tribe
- 15: Jay Sean ft. Lil Wayne - Down
- 16: Clubbringer ft. Kate Lesing - Rivers of Avalon (Nightcore Mix)
- 17: IOSYS - The Lovely, Freezing, Tomboyish Bath, Cirno's Hot Spring
- 18: Sega - Samba de Janeiro
- 19: Queen - Don't Stop Me Now
- 20: Tenacious D - Tribute
- 21: Hyadain - Yie Ar Kung Fu Rap
- 22: Susumu Hirasawa - KIRBY Mix Compilation
- 23: Trauma Center: Second Opinion - Vulnerability
- 24: Makiko Noda - Long Dream
- 25: Electric Six - Gay Bar
- 26: Chatmonchy - Make Up! Make Up!
- 27: Sushi971 - Techno Blocks
- 28: Julian Miranda - You're the Inspiration
- 29: Nightcore - Ass Up!
- 30: Masami Ueda - Shinshuu Plains
- 31: DCX (D-Tune) - Flying High
- 32: Aimee B - Fallen Angel (TV Size)
- 33: Ke\$ha - TiK ToK
- 34: Keiichi Suzuki - New Age Retro Hippie
- 35: Michael Jackson - Man in the Mirror
- 36: Liz Triangle - Who Killed U.N.Owen
- 37: Jimmy Eat World - The Middle
- 38: Perfume - Baby Cruising Love
- 39: Susumu Hirasawa - SWITCHED-ON LOTUS
- 40: Kommisar - Bad Apple!! (Chiptune ver.)
- 41: Kevin Ridel - Without a Fight
- 42: Alvaro Veliz y Daniela Aleuy - Pokemon Theme (Spanish)
- 43: Capcom Sound Team - Dr. Wily Stage 1:2
- 44: Lady Gaga - Poker Face
- 45: HTT - NO, Thank You! (Full Ver.)
- 46: Patrick Phelan (daXX remix) - Lotus III Intro
- 47: Yoko Shimomura - Castlevania Soul Battle
- 48: The EX-Box Boys - Braid - Counting You Up
- 49: David Wise - Crescent Island
- 50: Danimal Cannon - Rockin' on Heaven's Door
- 51: Chicago - You're the Inspiration
- 52: Susumu Hirasawa - Shiroi Oka - Maromi no Theme
- 53: Diablo Swing Orchestra - Balrog Boogie

Uh oh! Due to the nature of how the collage was created, two elements were accidentally left out. This box is dedicated to them. All teams earn an additional two points.

- 54: IOSYS - Neko Miko Reimu
- 55: Masayoshi Minoshima feat. Larto & nomico - Awesome Apple!!



# ALL TOGETHER NOW!

By: Doomsday

Y'Alright? It's Doomsday.

If you can summon memories of the distant past of last month, or more specifically, the 4th edition of the osu!monthly (you know, the one with the awesome storyboard collage cover), you might remember a little something called "The Community Effect". If you don't, you either need to have your memory checked or you never read it, in which case, do so! (...Or not. I can't really force you). At any rate, in that article I talked, or perhaps rambled, about how close the osu! community is. This time I'll be taking a closer look at one of the many ways osu!'s users come together: collabs (short for collaborations), the commonly used name for a beatmap set mapped by multiple people. I like to think of it as the mapping equivalent of a group hug.

A huge percentage of ranked maps have some kind of collaboration going on in them, ranging from a single difficulty made by another mapper (known as a guest difficulty) to a single difficulty mapped by multiple mappers, to every difficulty in a beatmap mapped by a different, or even multiple mappers! At the time of writing, out of the 40 most recently ranked beatmaps, **6** have been created entirely by a single mapper. That's a paltry 15%. More than half, **21** to be exact, bear the stamp of three or more mappers. I don't know about you, but I find that astonishing. If I were a cynic, those numbers might even cause me to lament that the art of solo mapping is dying. Fortunately I'm not; solo maps still thrive. Collabs are just great fun.

So, it seems like collabs are pretty popular, but is that a good thing? What better way to find out than an advantages and disadvantages list! Don't forget, there's no way to be objective with something like that. No matter my experience, in the end all this is just my opinion, and you may not agree with all of it. But hey, that's the most interesting thing about opinions, the fact that they're different.

## A variety platter of mapping styles

Let's say you get a beatmap, and the mapper who uploaded it likes to use a steamy style. That's all well and good, but let's imagine he's collaborated with a different user, who mapped the same song in the iNiS style (in other words, similar to the stages in the Ouendan or Elite Beat Agents DS games, on which osu!'s gameplay is based). These are two completely different styles, and as such feel completely different to play. Not only is it interesting to see the song mapped in different ways, but it also gives you a greater range of choices on how you can enjoy a certain song.

But on the other hand...

## Too many cooks spoil the broth

Variety in styles can be great, but sometimes mappers can get carried away. The result is a bloated map set full of different mappers and unrelated styles. Individually they may be fun, but if you take a step back you'll admit it's a bit of a mess, right? This is especially the case when you run across three insane-level difficulties by different mappers with a sloppy easy difficulty added as an afterthought. If so, perhaps making a separate beatmap for the same song with the other insane difficulties would have been the better alternative?

## Sharing the workload

It's easy to mistake this one for laziness, but hear me out! I'm thinking of longer songs, the candidates for marathon maps, where someone would need to be an idle, hyper-focused NEET to finish it in a reasonable time. For the record, my ZUN Nonstop Medley took around 1.5 years to complete, although the fact that I was working on it on and off may be partly to blame (blimey!). In ambitious projects like these, having multiple mappers work on different sections at the same time is a great way to see a long or repetitive song mapped with your sanity intact. Not to mention collab marathons are possibly the most effective way to see multiple mapping styles in a single map.

But even so, it still happens...

## Don't say "Lazy"!

I'm sure most mappers are guilty of this at one point. They are happily mapping away on their favourite song. They get the harder difficulties done first and when it comes down to finishing it up with an Easy and/or Normal difficulty, their motivation drops. "Ugh... Now I have to map an Easy for this?". Perhaps it's because the song is repetitive, or the prospect of mapping 3 minutes of an Easy difficulty is a bit daunting. At this point, they either leave it and the map falls into the graveyard, or they hunt down someone else to do it for them. This doesn't always end badly. But it doesn't change the fact that with the ability for other people to help out in a beatmap, sometimes mappers can get complacent, and a little lazy. I'm not saying everyone does this regularly, but to every regular mapper reading this, I'm certain there has been a point when you have come around to finishing a map, lost motivation on the final difficulty and thought "Oh well, I'll just get someone else to do it instead". Be honest!

## "Need a mode-specific difficulty? I'm your guy!"

Of course, the osu! community isn't just about the osu!standard play mode. Unless you've been living under a rock, you know there's a large percentage of players who specifically play the Taiko or Catch-The-Beat game modes specifically, hardly touching osu!standard. If you ask a regular Taiko player about playing an osu!standard map in the Taiko game mode, he/she will probably tell you that 90% of them play badly, often because of faster osu!standard difficulties turning into Taiko maps too fast to keep up with, or the hitsounding causing the layout of the red and blue notes to be nonsensical or erratic. This holds true for Catch-The-Beat also. Some maps can be boring in Catch-The-Beat mode, or the jumps in an osu!standard map can translate to some odd movements in the Catch-The-Beat mode. If a mapper is not very proficient in mapping for a specific mode, those players will have to settle for sub-par quality when playing their favourite modes. Bummer.

But never fear! Thankfully there are many mappers that are proficient in mapping for specific game modes, especially Taiko. Mappers like these often make guest difficulties designed for a specific game mode in mind, catering to its fans. You can't argue with that...although 95% of Taiko-specific maps are of extremely high difficulty. Ouch.

The osu! community and collabs love each other dearly, and given how you guys keep making them all the time, it doesn't seem like this will change any time soon! I can't argue, I like collabs too. They're fun to play and even more fun to be a part of. However, it takes a certain level of coordination and awareness to make a good collab beatmap. Simply slamming a bunch of mappers together and asking them to make a difficulty each is like slamming neutrons into atoms: it will end up in a nuclear explosion. And surely you don't want mappers caught in a nuclear explosion.

Huh, that's a pretty dark ending to an article. I apologise.

## TIP 5

**Stacked notes, closely spaced notes, and notes over or under sliders are very challenging for beginners.** Just as it is hard to find your car keys in a very cramped office space, it is hard to find the next hit object when they are all clumped in one area.

## Collaboration Chaos!

As you can see, osu! is quite united in its community. Never has a rhythm game community been so intertwined in their creations and projects. It's truly a great sight. In turn, this also leads to legions of collaboration maps! Here's a few notable ones.



Tomohito Nishiura - Theme of the Last Time Travel (Live)

The pinnacle of Layton maps. Puzzle aficionados led by Lilac got this one beautifully done together.



FamilyMart Jingle

A must-have for any fan of Chinese maps, this simple jingle will definitely keep you coming back. Watch out! The last difficulty is extremely tough!



Molotov - Yofo

What do you get when merging some of the best Spanish mappers together? Why, of course, it's this catchy, whimsical tune! A nice Spanish treat.



Usher ft. Pitbull - DJ Got Us Fallin' In Love

Leave it to Roddie to make a sensational modern Western collaboration! Complete with a rockin' storyboard, you'll fall in love fast.



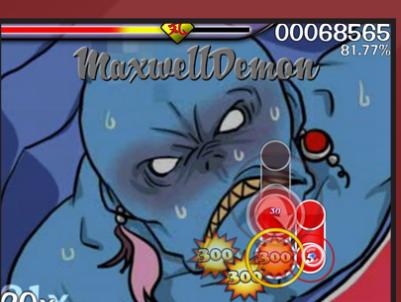
kors k vs. L.E.D. - SOLID STATE SQUAD

This collaboration illustrates one of yeahyeahhhh's best traits: being able to smoothly blend with the other participants — in this case, La Cataline.



Hirano Aya - Super Driver

The epic Haruhi collaboration — With a colorful vibe and an upbeat atmosphere, this map is definitely one super driver.



Hyadain - Battle with the Four Fiends

Spearheaded by mtmcl, the first master of collaborations, this was a secret project that caught everyone under delightful surprise. Also included is a Sinistro difficulty from a previous osu! tournament!



Kousaki Satoru - Lucky Star Mush! ~DustFunk

Any Lucky Star fan should not be deprived of this map. This is truly a collective effort among Lucky Star fans — from the map to even the storyboard. Definitely a feel-good marathon.

# storyboarding

## by scripting

### part 2: layers & objects

by: [starrodkirby86](#) & [sinistro](#)

Welcome back to the magical world of storyboarding. Hopefully there isn't too much dust collected around here! Last month we learned a few things about what goes behind the scenes with storyboarding, especially setting one up. This month we're going to cover everything you need to know about layers and what sort of objects you can insert in a storyboard. I'm surprised at how extensive this segment can be! But without further ado, let's get our hands dirty with some more storyboarding content. Remember to have Echo's [Storyboarding by Scripting](#) topic opened for any references or clarification as needed!

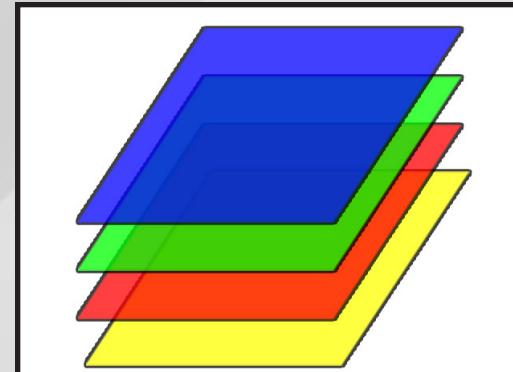
## Objects and Layers

Your storyboard's script can be written in two files: the .osb or the .osu. Of the two, the .osb file is usually preferred because any storyboard instructions written there will apply in all difficulties within the beatmap set. However, there are some scenarios where using the .osu, which only contains difficulty specific content, is more convenient. For example, map sets with difficulties that vary in play time need to use the .osu for their storyboard, or else a one minute difficulty with a storyboard lasting three minutes would result in a nightmarish "outro" that's two minutes long. For the sake of clarity and convenience, this guide has been written under the assumption that you're using an .osb file for your storyboarding needs.

### Layers

Upon opening the .osb, you'll be greeted with a near-empty [Events] section, containing subsections to place particular items in. These lines, as well as every line starting with two slash symbols, are what programmers call a "comment." They are not recognised by osu! and are meant for organisation and reference. Consider them as a convenient way to group similar events together.

Layers in osu! work much like layers in any image editor or other layer-based system, such as RPG Maker. The background is the lowest layer of them all, so any graphic placed here should be what the name suggests —backgrounds. After that we'll have the Fail and Pass layers, which are special condition layers. When playing, only one of them will appear, depending on the player's performance. The Pass layer will appear when the player completes a Geki combo (all 300); otherwise, the Fail layer will dominate. In breaks, Pass and Fail are based off the lifebar, with the halfway point making the difference between one and the other. Finally, we have the Foreground layer. The Foreground layer is always going to be on top, so it's best to put sprites (like collaborators' names) and strobe graphics here.



A visual representation of osu! layers.  
Yellow = Background  
Red = Fail  
Green = Pass  
Blue = Foreground

Within the same layer, the relative order of objects is decided by their script's position in the .osb file, known as z-order. Objects appear in front of/over any objects written before them. For example, if you first script an image called "a.png" and below it you script an image called "b.png" and they're both in, say, the Pass layer, "b.png" will appear on top of "a.png" if any parts of them occupy the same space. This is important, because it essentially allows you to make sub-layers and hide parts of images, broadening your storyboarding possibilities.

While this talk about layers helps in the aesthetic sense, you're probably wondering how to actually place those wonderful images into the storyboard. Time to get our technical caps on and talk about...

## Inserting Objects

We'll now explain how to define objects so that osu! can recognise them. From there, we'll be able to further manipulate them with commands. There are three types of objects in storyboarding: sprites, animations and sound effects. The script for sprite definition follows this format:

**Sprite, "Layer", "Origin", "Filepath", x, y**

Let's break down what each of these words mean:

**Sprite:** This tells osu! that the object is a sprite, so it should treat it as such.

**Layer:** This field specifies what layer you want your object to be in. Remember that the double-slash comments saying "//Storyboard Layer 0 (Background)" and whatnot are purely referential and do not actually tell osu! which layer the object should be in. The possible entries you can write in the Layer field are Background, Fail, Pass, and Foreground.

**Origin:** The origin is the point of reference that the x and y coordinates will follow in your object. For example, if you specify "TopLeft" in your Origin, then osu! will base the x and y coordinates off the top-left part of the image. Scaling and rotating are affected by the origin as well. Most scales and rotations work best when the origin is set to "Centre", as nothing will turn lopsided or uneven. The possible entries for the Origin field are TopLeft, TopCentre, TopRight, CentreLeft, Centre, CentreRight, BottomLeft, BottomCentre, and BottomRight.

**Filepath:** The filepath is the location of your image, starting from the song folder as the root. If the image is inside the song folder itself, simply write the image name and call it a day. If the image is inside subfolders within the song folder, you'll need to specify that as well, complete with backslashes like a Windows Explorer address. For example, if the image "white.png" is inside a subfolder named "SB", you'll have to write the filepath as "SB\white.png".

### NOTE:

The quotation marks for "Layer", "Origin", and "Filepath" are optional. Whether you include them or not is up to you. However, you cannot place quotation marks around Sprite, x, and y, otherwise osu! would not recognise it as an object.

**X:** This is the x-coordinate of your sprite in pixels. Unless you're planning to have your sprite move around, it's pretty much going to stay there, so choose a good spot! osu!'s playfield size is 640x480, so its centre's coordinate would be 320, if the origin is set to Centre. You can find good areas to place your sprite by going onto the editor and hovering the cursor around, checking the x and y entries near the Insert Break Time button.

**Y:** Unsurprisingly, this is the y-coordinate of your sprite in pixels. It's pretty much the same thing as your x-coordinate, except that things are going vertical since it's y. Since osu!'s playfield size is 640x480, its centre for the y-coordinate would be 240, if your origin is set to Centre.

Here's an example of a sprite and its properties.

### Sprite, Foreground, Centre, "sb\names\natteke.png", 400, 420

**NOTE:**  
osu! follows British English spelling, so make sure it's typed "Centre" instead of "Center"!

This is telling osu! to create a **Sprite** in the **Foreground layer** at **400,420** (somewhere in the bottom right corner) using "**sb\names\natteke.png**" as the graphic. It'll base that placement using the image's center point because I specified the **origin** as **Centre**.

When you first insert the object, you may be baffled at how nothing appears on the screen, as if nothing has changed. You've fully reloaded the map, so where's the object you placed? If you've done everything right, it's there, but it's just not appearing yet since there's nothing for it to do. You can verify that you inserted a sprite by looking for its name at the right hand side of the Design tab.

The script for defining animations follows this format:

### Animation, "Layer", "Origin", "Filepath", x, y, frameCount, frameDelay, looptype

**Animation** serves the same purpose as **Sprite**. It lets osu! know that the object defined here is an animation (a collection of sprites).

**Layer**, **Origin**, **X**, and **Y** have been explained above.

**Filepath:** Because we're defining a group of images, rather than a single sprite, **we need to name all images comprising an animation using a certain convention**. The file name of the first image in an animation should end with the number zero, as in "walk0.png". The file names of every image after that should end with a number that is one higher than the one before it. Following from our example, the second image should be called "walk1.png", the third "walk2.png" and so on. When specifying the animation's "file name" in the filepath, you just omit any numbers ("walk.png").

**frameCount:** This is the number of frames (sprites) an animation consists of.

**frameDelay:** This is the amount of time in milliseconds (ms) that osu! displays each frame of the animation. Depending on your inspiration and the difference between each image, the ideal value for this number can vary. If your animation's frames flow well from one to the other, you could try a frameDelay of 42 ms or so. That will give your animation a speed of 24 frames per second, which is generally considered the lowest speed required for the human eye to be "fooled" into recognising a succession of images as smooth movement.

**looptype:** This defines how many times the animation will loop. By leaving this space blank or entering "LoopForever", the animation will loop constantly. That doesn't mean you have to put up with it for the entire map! You can use a command (more on those next month) to hide it after you no longer need it. If you enter "LoopOnce", the animation will play just once, and stop on the last frame.

The script for sound effect definition follows this format:

### Sample, Time, Layer, "Filepath", volume

**Sample** serves the same purpose of **Sprite** or **Animation**. It lets osu! know that the object it's dealing with here is a sound file.

**Layer** and **Filepath** have been explained above. Background and Foreground are interchangeable as far as sounds are concerned.

**Time**, expressed in milliseconds, is the point in time where you want the sound to start playing.

**Volume** controls how loud the sound effect will be compared to the file's original volume. **The possible entries for Volume are the numbers from 1 to 100, and they're interpreted as a percentage**. For example, using 50 will make the sound half as loud in the game. You can choose to leave this parameter blank, in which case osu! will default at full volume, just as if you had set it at 100.

As you can see, there isn't as much space to continue anymore, so we'll have to unfortunately call it another day here. Last month, we planned to teach you particular SB commands, but the circumstances here turned quite hairy! We're terribly sorry for this inconvenience. In the meantime, you can continue studying yourself with Echo's Storyboarding by Scripting topic and, of course, experiment. Looking at other mappers' storyboards can also teach you a thing or two about the mechanics with storyboarding! See you next time!

## TIP 6

Take care with the difficulty settings. The difficulty tab under the song setup is a place where you should spend a good amount of time. Experiment with the four difficulty sliders until you find a good balance between the map being more than any boring map, and the map not being too hard.

# SPEEDRANKING

WRITTEN BY: KRZY

Hello, hope everyone is enjoying their summers. This is KRZY writing.

The mappers in this community, including myself, understand how important yet time-consuming the modding and ranking process of a map can be. While the time it takes for a map to get ranked differs according to many variables such as the mapper's mapping skills, the mapper's ability to contact modders and get his map modded, and the mapper's enthusiasm about his map, it is generally accepted that maps need at least a month to get ranked, no matter how experienced a mapper you are or how well-known you are in the community (there are, of course, a couple of exceptions; some mappers are known for getting his maps ranked rather fast, but only because their maps are uploaded in near-perfect states for ranking). Every now and then, however, a map comes along, receives a couple of mods, and is suddenly ranked. To mappers whose maps have been sitting in pending for months, this sight is not so pleasant, and quite often these "speedranked" maps are bashed for getting ranked so fast, sometimes becoming irrational to a point where the ranked map's thread must be locked to prevent further flaming. So, is speedranking okay? Why do people get so mad about speedranking? Can speedranking be avoided, or is it necessary to avoid them in the first place?

Opponents of speedranking rely on the first-come, first-served argument as one of their main reasons for discouraging speedranks. In other words, they think maps that have been in pending for a longer time must be modded prior to relatively newer maps. Take the recent example of My Shiny Teeth and Me by Katsuri, which was ranked two days after it was uploaded, and as a result was subjected to massive flaming and undeserved offensive comments, both on the map and the mapper. Although the posts have been deleted now, one strong argument that was presented in the topic after the rank was that there are "more important" maps out there that needed the BATs' attention more than this map did. While this argument may seem far-fetched and the notion of maps being more important than others absurd, there is a bit of truth in this argument: the majority of the relatively new mappers are often neglected by modders in favor of the more well-known, experienced mappers, making it harder and harder for the new mappers to get mods and eventually get their maps ranked. Some may dismiss this notion, insisting that it's the mappers being lazy and not trying hard enough to get mods instead of the modders favoring certain groups of mappers, but one cannot deny the fact that it is harder for a less known mapper to get a mod compared to how it is for a more known mapper.

**TIP 7**

Make sure that your map's graphical elements (background, video, skin) are all of acceptable quality and that their colors work well with each other. Black circles on a dark background or a fuzzy video make maps hard to play. You might want to use the color wheel and make your combo colors contrast and complement your background/video colors.

In contrast, there are people who think that it is perfectly okay for a map to be ranked a couple of days after it has been submitted if the map is ready for ranking. A BAT member stated in the thread of the map "My Shiny Teeth and Me" that "It is up to the BAT to pick and choose what maps they want to mod or not mod," and this, in a way, makes perfect sense as the BATs are basically volunteers, meaning they are not required in any way to mod certain maps nor are they under any obligation to favor older maps to newer maps. Think of it as the difference between a guideline and a rule: it is a guideline to mod maps that have been sitting in pending longer, so generally BATs opt to mod maps that have been waiting more but every now and then there is no problem with them modding fresh maps of good quality. And certainly, there is no need to say hurtful things to the mapper or downvote the map just because it was ranked so quickly; these actions are just irrational. James2250 puts it quite clearly: "Getting speed ranks is generally a thing better avoided when possible but there is no point in personally attacking the mapper or downvoting the entire mapset after their map has already been ranked."

Is this the way it should be, or should this be changed? The answer to this does not lie in this article, but in the chat rooms and forums of this game, where people need to gather and discuss how to improve on the situation so that it satisfies the maximum number of people possible while being justified to everyone.

**TIP 8**

Most Easy and Normal difficulty maps use grid size 1-2 and a divisor of 1/1, 1/2 or 1/3 in the editor. It's not impossible to make a good beginner map with other settings, but you need to know what you're doing!

## Speed Demon

So you got yourself one awesome beatmap, but perhaps getting it speed-ranked isn't the best move for it. Here's a few things you can do in its stead.

**Get more mods.** It doesn't hurt to get a wide, diverse assortment of mappers to each view the map and have their opinion. Not only does your map become more widespread, more people will play and give genuine feedback about it.

**Map more songs.** Naturally, practice makes perfect. Consider mapping a few more songs to sharpen your skills and create even more epic maps. Not every song needs to be uploaded!

**Play more maps.** Not everything in osu! revolves around the editor! You can take a good break from the Pending side of things and enjoy yourself with the gameplay. Playing a variety of maps can get you a good, intuitive feel of what's right, what's wrong, and what's fun.

# Jumping THE WRIST - KILLING TECHNIQUE

**Written by: Mr Color**

Hello, everyone. Last month, we talked about streams, one of the most commonly seen elements in hard osu! beatmaps. This time, we are going to look at jumps, another major component of challenging maps. Don't worry, though: you won't have to engage in any actual physical activity! Jumping is placing an object in defiance of the map's Distance Snap, in other words, farther (or closer) to the previous object than their distance on the timeline would imply. Just like streams, there are many varieties of jumps, most of the time referred to as techniques or patterns: Back and Forth, Star Formations, Anti-Jumps, Accelerated Spacing, and so on.

Let's begin with a type of jump that is becoming increasingly popular to the point of being overused: the Star Formation. It consists of 5 to 15 circles arranged in a symmetrical manner around a common central point, making the cursor draw a star polygon as it moves from one circle to the next. The star pattern becomes more apparent as the number of circles involved increases. Star Formations might look easy to clear, but because they require many quick and precise changes of direction, players often end up getting confused and missing.

Another commonly employed technique, thanks to its ease of use, is the Back and Forth. A Back and Forth pattern is a combo where the circles (or sliders sometimes) are alternately placed on two specific positions. The spacing between the two points doesn't have to be large enough for it to constitute a jump, but generally this is how mappers use it. Back and Forth is another jumping technique that is harder to master than it seems, as it involves jumping between two precise spots rather quickly while moving the mouse or tablet pen in the opposite direction. Another reason is that they are sometimes complicated to read, especially when playing under the Hidden mod.

We will now move to more advanced jumping techniques. First, we have the Oibon Jump, an exaggerated jump that has an object placed at one side of the screen and the next one at the other side. Mappers use it at 1/1 snap and sometimes at 1/2 on harsh maps, but never at 1/4.

## Leap of Faith

Of course, it wouldn't be helpful if we didn't have example maps to perfect these techniques in. Let's check out a few!



**capsule - JUMPER**  
A map that's true to its name. Expect some minor Oibon jumps and total symmetry, but at a feasible BPM.



**IOSYS - Poinsettia**  
This astral map is the mother of star formations. It's swift and challenging!



**Yuuna Kamishiro - Shrill False**  
Mystical yet difficult. Beware of decelerated spacing and spaced streams as the map progresses to its evil peak.



**DJ Fresh - Gold Dust**  
Take a giant leap of faith with this one! With mean Oibon Jumps, creative pattern shapes, and a giant spacing overall, this one's monstrous!

Clearing an Oibon Jump requires a good view of the entire play field, as well as perfect mouse control in order to quickly drag the cursor to a specific point all the way across the screen. Using a touch screen as an input device will take care of the problem and earn you the envy of many players, myself included.

Next on the list is Accelerated Spacing, one of the most hated techniques around, since it is often not used correctly, and even when it is, it tends to look ugly and be hard to clear. A pattern with accelerated spacing is a combo where the spacing increases with every subsequent object. This makes it very hard to keep up with because, while the rhythm of your tapping must stay the same, the speed at which you drag the cursor constantly increases.

The Anti-Jump operates on the completely opposite principle from jumps, but is by no means less challenging. Instead of placing an object farther than Distance Snap recommends, Anti-Jumps are about putting the object closer to the previous one. Their difficulty does not lie in the distance the cursor needs to travel, but rather in confusing the player's note-reading, leading them to tap sooner than they need to and causing them to miss as a result. Anti-Jumps are often used in streams to make them easier to read and hit (in which case they are called Compressed Streams), but they're generally hard to use correctly, and many are removed by modders before a map is ranked.

We'll conclude with a technique that combines streams and jumps: the spaced stream. A spaced stream is, as its name implies, a stream with high spacing. Since clearing this technique requires both a consistently accurate sense of rhythm along with large, quick, yet accurate cursor movements, it is not surprising that it is used rarely, mostly appearing in Approved maps.

While not exhaustive, this article covers most of the jumping patterns you will encounter. For those who want to improve their jumping skills, here are a couple of tips: first, experiment with your mouse or tablet sensitivity settings until you find the one that you feel grants you the most control over the cursor. Furthermore, turn mouse precision mode off in osu!'s options. Yes, off. When it's on, the faster you move your mouse (like, for example, when you're trying to clear jumps) the faster your cursor moves, which can easily ruin your accuracy. As with most things, though, the best way to improve is the same piece of advice I offered on streams: practice a lot, especially on maps with lots of jumps. And remember to enjoy it. What's the point of getting good at a game if you're not having fun doing so?

# GAMES CORNER

## SPELUNKY

Written by: Mr Color

Our older readers may remember a very hard and frustrating game called *Spelunker*, released on several home computers and first-generation consoles. For those people, Spelunky, a freeware PC (and soon to be released on Xbox Live Arcade) indie rogue-like game by Derek Yu, may stir some memories. It shares Spelunker's concept, 8-bit presentation (despite being made in 2008), frustration factor and even most of its name. There is, however, one significant difference: every level, except for the final boss, is randomly generated, making each playthrough a brand new experience.

The goal of the game is to clear its fifteen levels and defeat the final boss, collecting as much treasure as possible along the way. During your exploration in the depths of a cave, an underground jungle, an ice cave, and a temple, you will encounter many enemies and hazards. You start each new game with only four bombs and four ropes to your name, and a mere four hit points is all that protects your single life.

Fortunately, you will encounter a large variety of shops, including weapon shops, curiosity shops, gambling houses, and kissing booths, all of which sell items that will help you throughout your descent into the dark caves. Some items, like the Shotgun or the Jetpack, are extremely useful, making your adventure safer and easier. Other items, like the Bow, are less impressive and still others, like the Teleporter, can provide you with many stupid deaths. If you can't or won't pay for an item, you can either search the crates lying around the game and hope for the best or shoplift and risk the wrath of the shopkeeper...

Besides its buying power, collecting money is the ultimate goal of Spelunky. Each time you die or complete the game, your amount of money is saved, along with how many beasts you killed and how many damsels in distress you saved. Money appears in various forms: golden nuggets, golden bars, gems, golden idols, golden cockroaches etc. Some items are worth more money than others but can require taking lethal risks, like the Crystal Skull, which, when collected, summons an invincible ghost that will turn you to dust with one poke.

Both Spelunker and Spelunky are challenging to the point of frustration. However, while Spelunker was notorious for being "unfair", every death in Spelunky is the player's fault, like miscalculating a jump, triggering a stealthy arrow trap or getting shot to death by a disgruntled shopkeeper. Both keyboard and joypad controls are simple, although the precision required to cling to ropes or vines is pretty high.

In a nutshell, Spelunky is a very fun and addictive game, thanks to the replay value of its randomized levels, but also very hard and frustrating. If you want to learn more, you can browse the [Spelunky wiki](#), which will tell you about every single enemy, item, and everything else that goes on in the game! I hope you try it out and enjoy searching for the legendary City of Gold...



Yet another stupid death. You'll get used to it pretty quickly.



Occasionally, special events can happen per level, such as this miniboss battle with a giant piranha.

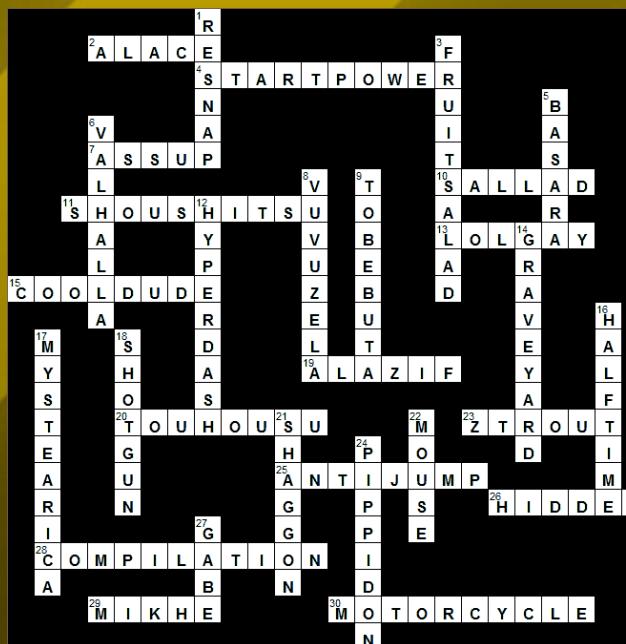
osu!monthly

# CROSSWORD #3

Get ready for another round of the osu!monthly Crossword! Let's see if you can solve these 28 head-scratchers.

- Feel free to work in teams!
- All answers use only alpha characters. No numerals or symbols.
- Consider the deadline by the next edition's release.
- Please don't publicly discuss the answers or hint at them.
- A printable version can be viewed [here](#).
- To submit your answers and view a more detailed list of the rules, click [here](#).

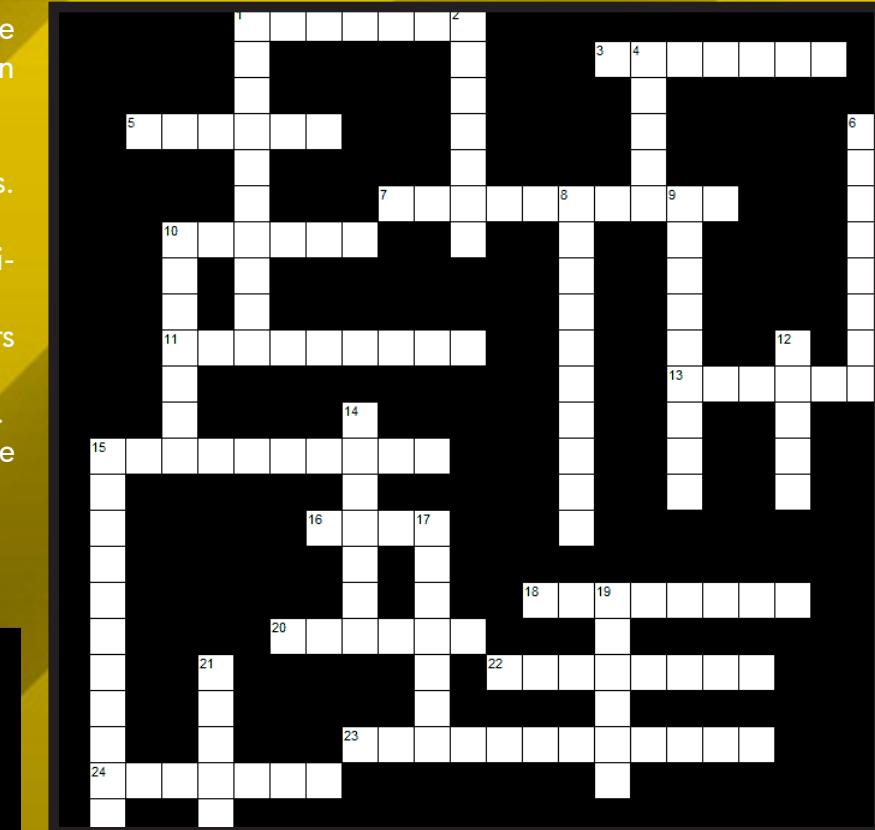
## Last Edition's Answers



## Hall of Fame



The Hall of Fame needs a friend!  
Can you save it from its loneliness?



### ACROSS:

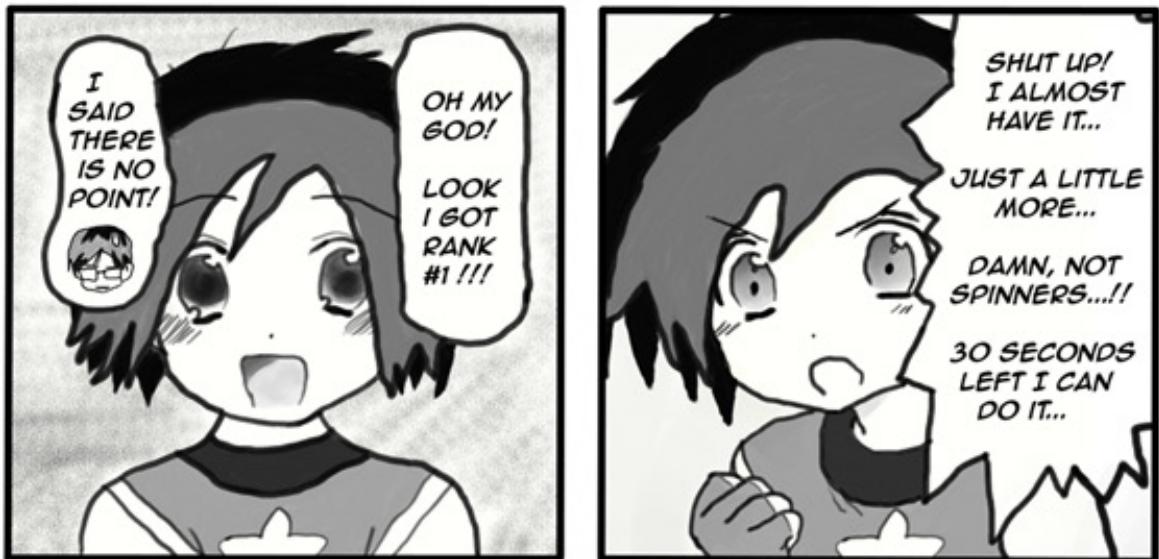
- Who's that boy that mapped Carlito
- osu! me!
- Thinking about love
- How to politely refuse a popular map
- Wizard of Orz
- An Aha! moment
- The phoenix down of osu!
- That's not a doll
- \_\_\_\_ 980
- Like 10 down, it doesn't count
- Spinner season
- Like a chica-cherry cola
- For Reikin, for sliders, for the spinners
- And the Chinese hen said, "No pain, no gain!"

### DOWN:

- Occasional performance cameo
- DON'T BREAK IT
- Can barrel roll out code
- Monochrome mania
- Wowed with Wowaka
- You're a dynamic, multi-holder
- When spinners unrank
- Appeared in the previous two crosswords... sort of
- Vocaloid pioneer
- Master of a certain forum game
- Five-minute yellow card
- A sound on emphasis
- osu!'s 4chan

# osureshii!

osu!monthly comic #1



READ FROM RIGHT TO LEFT

osu!monthly

# CAPTION CONTEST

Oh no! Pippi seems to have lost her voice! No matter what she says, all her shout-outs are totally mute!

Help Pippi by giving a voice for her. Here we have our mascot in a rather sticky situation:



Can you think of anything for Pippi to say? [Submit your caption here!](#) We'll publish the best ones in our next edition.

# osu! monthly

Hope you enjoyed this month's edition! Here's a preview of what to expect for September's edition of the osu!monthly.

- We'll be interviewing [Lybydose](#) next edition, so submit any questions you have in mind [using this form](#).
- Now that we had a good plethora of mapping tips, how about some modding tips? We'll dive ourselves in on the bustling map development side of osu!.
- Next month we'll finally get to the juiciest part of storyboarding — the commands themselves. Mastering these will make you a wonderful storyboarder in no time.

We have some wonderful surprises in store for next month, so keep an eye out for September's edition in an Announcements forum near you. Until next time!