



## Introduction

The concept is so simple: Take your ship and shoot out the other shapes without getting hit. Yet somehow, Geometry Wars: Retro Evolved has turned into the must have Xbox Live Arcade download. Is it the hypnotic music? Or is it all of those flashy particle effects? Maybe it is the way the game ramps up to insane difficulties so quickly. Whatever the reason, we've lost more sleep over this game than any in recent memory. But all of that lost sleep has not been for naught. We now possess the talents to break that much desired 1,000,000 point mark.

Having trouble with those pesky little green blocks? We'll teach you how to put them back into your freshman year math class where they belong. Don't know what to do when the jacks come out? We've got fool-proof strategy. Who knows when the shapes will attack? When they do, and they will, you'd better be prepared.



Look inside our free starter guide for:

- **Basic Strategy:** Starter info to put you on the right path.
- **Enemies:** A look at each type of enemy in the game. We'll tell you how they'll behave and what you should do to avoid being destroyed by each of them.
- **Achievements:** Learn how to get all of the Achievement Points.

Guide by: Erik Brudvig

# Basic Strategy

## The Very Basics

The entire game of Geometry Wars: Retro Evolved comes down to shoot or be destroyed. Enemies will chase you and it is your job to kill them before they touch you. The controls are as simple as they come. Use the Right Analog Stick to direct your fire. You can aim in any direction regardless of which way you are facing. The Left Analog Stick is used for steering your ship. If you don't press anything, you will remain motionless. You can fly in any direction at any time. The final bit of controls that you need to know is the Right Trigger. Pulling it will set off a bomb that will clear almost the entire screen of enemies.

You begin the game with 3 lives and 3 bombs. Each time you get hit, you lose a life. On the positive side, you'll receive an extra life every time you gain an additional 75,000 points. You'll also get an extra bomb for every 100,000 points you get.



## The Guns

The first gun that you start out with is a single direction machine gun. It is fully automatic and you have unlimited ammunition. Don't ever stop shooting! Once you reach 10,000 points, you'll receive a spread gun. There are two types of these, one of which is slightly more chaotic than the other. Both have the same end result but you'll periodically switch back and forth between the two spread guns as your score increases.

## Use the Multiplier

Geometry Wars keeps track of how many shapes you have destroyed without dying. At set amounts, you'll receive a bonus multiplier. This bonus will multiply times the base score of each shape you destroy. That means, if you have an x8 Multiplier and destroy a shape worth 100 points, you'll actually receive 800 points. This is the key to high scores in Geometry Wars. If you can survive only one life for a long time, your multiplier will get so big that your score will exponentially increase.

The key to scoring a huge multiplier is not dying. This means that you should do everything in your power to kill as many enemies as quickly as possible. See our Enemies section for tips on doing this with Jacks and red the Bombs Away section below for more tips.



## Bombs Away

Bombs are your all purpose defense utility. They'll get you out of a pinch, so you should only use them when certain death is imminent. If you make a mistake or find yourself with nowhere to go, pull the Right Trigger to clear out a path.

There is a drawback to using bombs. The first is that you don't receive any points for enemies destroyed by using the bomb. The second drawback is that you don't have an unlimited supply. If you really want a high score, you'll need to save the bombs for later in the game when things get hectic. Since you don't get any points for using a bomb, we will pretty much only use them when we have a large multiplier. Saving an x8 multiplier is much more important than wrangling a few extra points out of a desperate situation.



## Circle Strafe For the Win

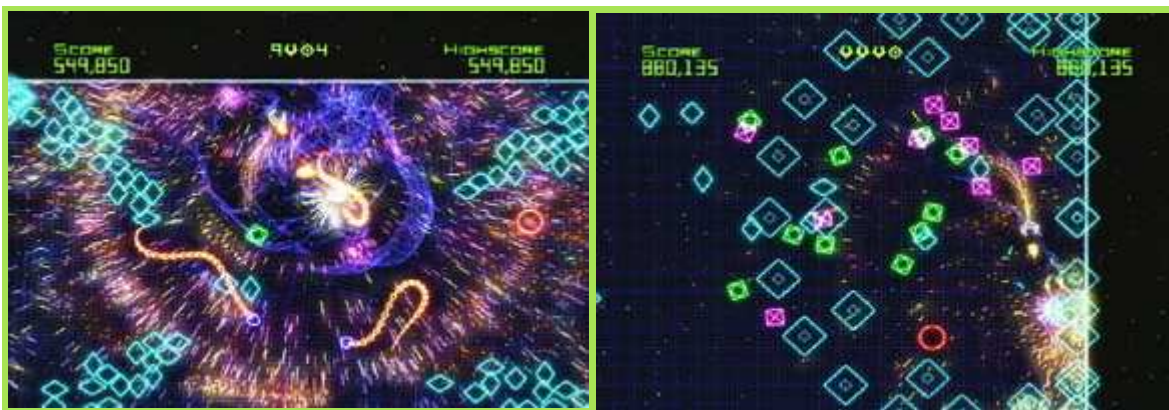
Most enemies in Geometry Wars have limited homing capabilities. This means they will continuously chase you, but they can't turn as quickly as you. Use your agility to your advantage and never ever stop moving. Continuously circle around the outer edges. Fire ahead of your ship to clear a path and then shoot towards the clump of enemies that will amass in the middle.



## Common Patterns

Most enemy shapes will spawn from the corners and move directly towards you. For this reason, hanging out in the corners when enemies are about to spawn is a bad idea. Try to stay near the middle as you wipe out the last in a group of enemies to give yourself the most room to move around. It should also be noted that oftentimes when a corner spawn occurs, a Black Hole will also appear in that corner. As you are doing your circle strafing, make sure you take a moment to clear out the active Black Holes. If you leave an Active Black hole around for the next big spawn, you'll find that it will quickly result in a Black Hole detonation and you'll be surrounded by little pesky circles.





The second most common spawn is the surround pattern. Here, you'll see a circle of similar enemies spawned in a ring around your ship. This can be daunting at first, but you'll quickly master it. Simply pick a direction and go full blast firing in front of you. You'll shoot your way out of the ring and leave behind a nice large target.

### Walls: Friend or Foe?

Flying into a wall won't kill you, thankfully. Squeezing up against the wall to get past a large crew of enemies is a great maneuver to stay alive, but be wary of hanging out close to the walls for too long. The reason for this is the common occurrence of surround patterns. If you are close to the wall and a surround pattern comes, it will actually appear on top of your ship since it can't go outside of the boundary. If you do decide to hug the walls, be on the lookout for appearing enemies and be ready to pull away at a moments notice. We prefer to just stay away from walls entirely since this is one of the most frustrating ways to die.

## Enemies

### Pinwheels

#### Base Score: 25 Points

These lowly enemies are slow and have the IQ of cauliflower. Pinwheels are the first enemy that you'll encounter in the game and will become less and less common as your score goes up. Being hit by one kills you just the same as anything else, but they won't target you like the rest of the enemies in this game. Each Pinwheel will simply bounce off of the edges and continue along its path until you shoot it out. These fellows shouldn't be too much of a problem, even for beginners. Once things start getting hectic, you should ignore them unless they're in your path and just hope to kill them with stray fire.

If you're looking for the Pacifism Achievement, these guys will be one of the most difficult parts. The screen will be almost full of them blocking off most of your paths. Make sure you look several steps ahead for any potential openings and try not to get boxed in.

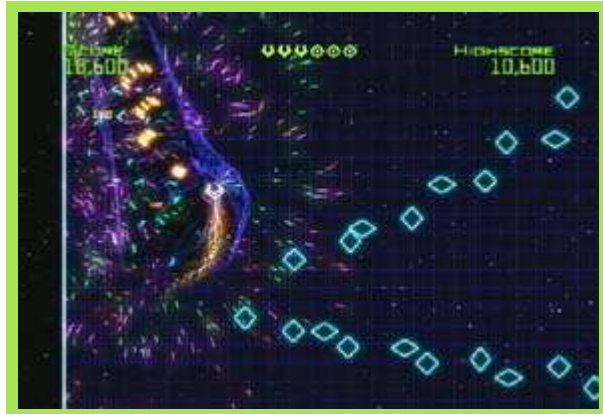


## Diamonds

### Base Score: 50 Points

Diamonds are the second enemy that will appear in the game. They move slowly compared to every other shape sent at you, but they do have slight homing capabilities. For this reason, you should be on the lookout for strays that somehow break away from the main pack. Be sure you take into account that they will move towards you as you decide where to move next. Since they're so slow, moving in a wide circle around the edges will round them up into a nice clump that can be blasted for lots of points.

Diamonds will often spawn in huge swarms from the corners. Plant yourself down and aim for one of the arms to quickly tally up some points before going off to take on the rest. The Diamonds should be your money shape since they are easy to kill, come in large numbers, and rarely get in your way.



## Green Squares

### Base Score: 100 Points

Green Squares have better homing than Diamonds, plus they're faster. To make matters worse, they also will dance away from shots that you fire at them. This means that you'll have to hit them with a direct shot in order to wipe them out. Anything that is close, but not straight at them, will be dodged.

The best way to do away with Green Squares is to spray a random arc of shots at them. When you only have the single shot, sweep back and forth in their area to confine them to a small space and eventually one of your shots will land home. Once you have the spread guns, the Green Squares won't be a problem any more. Just aim and fire. As long as your shot is direct, they'll dance out of the way of the central bullets only to get hit by another. To cover all of your bases, make a small sweep of shots in their general area. You don't want a miss to come back to haunt you.



## Pink Boxes

### Base Score: 100 Points (50 Points per small)

The Pink Boxes may very well become your first nemesis. They'll come directly at you quickly and with good targeting. Once you shoot them, they explode into three smaller Pink Boxes. The bonus to this is that you can rack up huge points. The negative part is that the smaller Pink Boxes have an odd spiral movement that can easily get in your way.

There are two techniques for dealing with Pink Boxes, both of which you'll need to perfect. If there are only one or two on the screen, you should shoot them and continue to shoot in the direction of the larger one. This will take out at least one of the smaller Pink Boxes that pops out and you can easily make a small sweep of the area with your blaster to take out the other two. If there are many Pink Boxes on the screen at once, you should begin flying away from them in an arc to round them up into one central clump. Then, begin shooting the ones that are at the back of the clump (away from where you are going to turn). The ones that explode out of the bigger Pink Boxes will remain in the clump and not get into your path allowing you to keep sweeping around in a circle without having anything



get in the way.

## Snakes

### Base Score: 150 Points

Snakes aren't the most common enemy, but they do cover the most area. You can only kill one by shooting it in the white head. Anything that hits their body will be absorbed with no effect. Snakes are most dangerous when you allow them to spread out. This is due to the fact that many of them will become intertwined and defend each other.

Be careful not to allow yourself to be cornered when the Snakes appear. Simply pick a direction and shoot your way out. Once you are clear of the initial circle, turn your fire and spray it randomly across the clump of Snakes to hopefully clear them out. Also, make sure you stay away from the walls when Snakes are around. Not only can they quickly spawn on top of you instantly killing you, they also have a nasty tendency to turn their heads away from you and block your path out, leaving you with a certain death.



## Black Holes

### Base Score: 150 Points

Black Holes begin as benign, red circles. They usually appear in corners, though you'll occasionally run into them in the center of the battlefield. If you don't shoot them, they will just sit there and act as a small obstacle that you'll have to dodge. Once you do hit them with some shots, they will become active. An active Black Hole will have a gravitational pull that will slightly tug you towards it if you fly near. It will also suck enemies into it, which makes active Black Holes a dangerous place to play near.



As a Black Hole sucks in enemies, it will grow in size. If it gets big enough, it will explode (read more below). You can prevent it from exploding by shooting it. For each bullet that you hit it with, it will shrink slightly in size. If you make it shrink enough, you will destroy it. Keep in mind that the point value for destroying a Black Hole increases as it sucks more enemies in. A fully engorged Black Hole can net you thousands of points after your multiplier kicks in.

Since Black Holes usually appear in corners, you can use them as a defensive piece. Plant yourself up against the wall and pull away from the Black Hole so that you don't get sucked in. Everything that comes towards you will be sucked into the Black Hole instead of hitting you. Shoot the Black Hole before it detonates and you'll receive a nice amount of points with minimal risk.



## Detonated Black Holes

### Base Score: 50 Points

If you activate a Black Hole and then don't destroy it, it will begin exerting its gravitational pull. This will suck in all surrounding enemies, causing it to expand and become unstable. If enough enemies get sucked into the Black Hole, it will detonate sending out a stream of small circles.

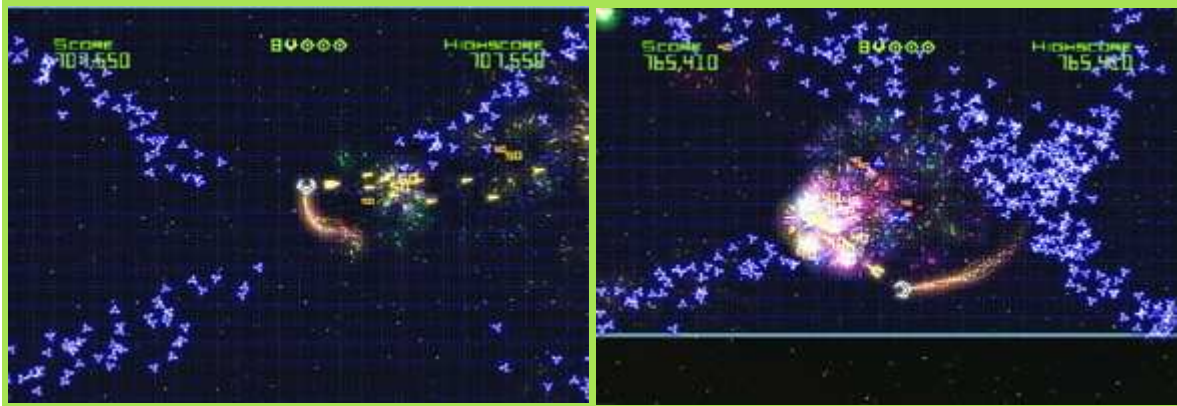
These circles are extremely fast and will quickly traverse the entire battlefield in a beeline towards your ship. Despite their great speed, these circles are not agile. That means that when the Black Holes start detonating, you should start moving in an arc away from the circles while shooting at them as they come towards you. They'll miss to the side and you can easily mop up any that you missed. Remember, playing near Black Holes that are near detonation is extremely dangerous. If they pop, you won't have time to get out of the way.



## Jacks

### Base Score: 10 Points

Jacks are some of the most annoying enemies in the game only because when they do come, they come in numbers. Literally hundreds of Jacks will come pouring out of each of the four corners. You won't be able to simply aim and take them out. There are too many of them! Instead, move to the bottom of the screen and start shooting at the right group. Just before they close in above you, swoop up firing to clear a path to the top of the screen. Turn to the right along the top edge and keep shooting. Once you see a thin section, blast a hole in it and go down through it.



Keep blasting your way down until you are back at the bottom of the screen. Next, move to the left and blast back up through the trail end of the Jacks on that side. Now, you should have cleared out all of the edges and you can return to your usual circle-strafting of the clump in the center.

Jacks may seem like a huge pain without a big point reward, but don't be so quick to bomb them. Although they won't give you many points, you'll quickly up your multiplier by wiping out a swarm of them which will lead to huge points later.

## Pac Men

### Base Score: 150 Points

We're not really sure why we call these guys Pac Men. They only vaguely resemble Pac Man, but it's already ingrained in our minds and it's too late to turn back now. In reality, they're just clones of your ship. Instead of being able to shoot like you do, the Pac Men can put up a shield in front of them. This can be extremely frustrating because there is no way to shoot down the shield.

There is hope for dealing with the Pac Men. Like the Detonated Black Holes, Pac Men are fast, but not agile. Simply keep moving in an arc away from them and they'll miss you. Even better, when they miss they become vulnerable to a shot to their unguarded behind.

A second technique, though for experts only, is to simply plow straight at a Pac Man with your guns blazing. Their pattern involves briefly letting their shield down to recharge it and you'll usually be able to destroy them before they kill you.



## Achievements

There may not be many possible Achievement Points in Xbox Live Arcade games, but getting them in Geometry Wars should be a matter of pride. Basically, if you can score 1,000,000 points without dying, you will gain every Achievement there is, except for Pacifism and maybe Quartermaster. To get the Quartermaster, you'll have to make it to 600,000 points without using a bomb. For Pacifism, you can't use your bombs so simply dodge everything for 60 seconds to unlock it. You'll know when you've done it because a sound will chime.

Achievement	Points	Description
Score 100,000	5	Earn 100,000 points.
Survived 100,000	5	Earn 100,000 points without dying.
Pacifism	10	Survive the first 60 seconds of the game without firing.
Score 250,000	10	Earn 250,000 points.
Survived 500,000	20	Earn 500,000 points without dying.
Mad Cat Skillz	20	Collect 9 lives. You need to have 9 lives in the bank.
Score 500,000	20	Earn 500,000 points.
Survived 250,000	10	Earn 250,000 points without dying.
Multitastic	20	Earn x10 multiplier.
Quartermaster	20	Collect 9 bombs. You need to have 9 bombs in the bank.
Score 1,000,000	30	Earn 1,000,000 points.
Survived 1,000,000	30	Earn 1,000,000 points without dying.