

Sharp Users Club - MZ700 Section - Sprite Basic

Sprite Basic Review by Mark Cox

Available from Solo Software this is standard basic but with many added commands, most of which will be useful to the arcade games writer/programmer.

Sprites are blocks of characters that can be moved around the screen as if they were one chunk - you have probably seen some on a Spectrum/Commodore etc, but now you too can have them!

Basic Sprites can be made up of up to 16 characters in any block format (ie 1*16, 2*8, 3*4, 3*5, 2*2, 3*3, 4*4 etc..). They can be multi-coloured and be a mixture of text, graphics, primary and secondary characters and, with the aid of some simple commands, up to six sprites can be displayed and moved almost simultaneously around the screen, so fast they need slowing down to be seen!!

The sprites need no further programming, and do not erase the background, saving programming time, space and execution time. Other commands have also been added to make a complete package:

Up to six screens can be stored in memory and recalled instantaneously providing animation, although if these are used they gobble up a considerable amount of memory (over 12k).

Like a recently published NCOLS routine colours can be swapped to give impressive title pages or explosions. There is also a "new" sound generator although it is hardly new and in my opinion totally useless.

The instructions to this Basic are to be found in the form of an instructive program on the reverse of the cassette that demonstrates all the commands and gives some interesting tips on how to use them. I would personally have liked a written summary of the commands but I guess whilst writing them out you tend to remember them. The commands use no extra memory (except screensave), they fit nicely into S-Basics free space. It is slightly expensive but worth every penny to the serious games programmer.