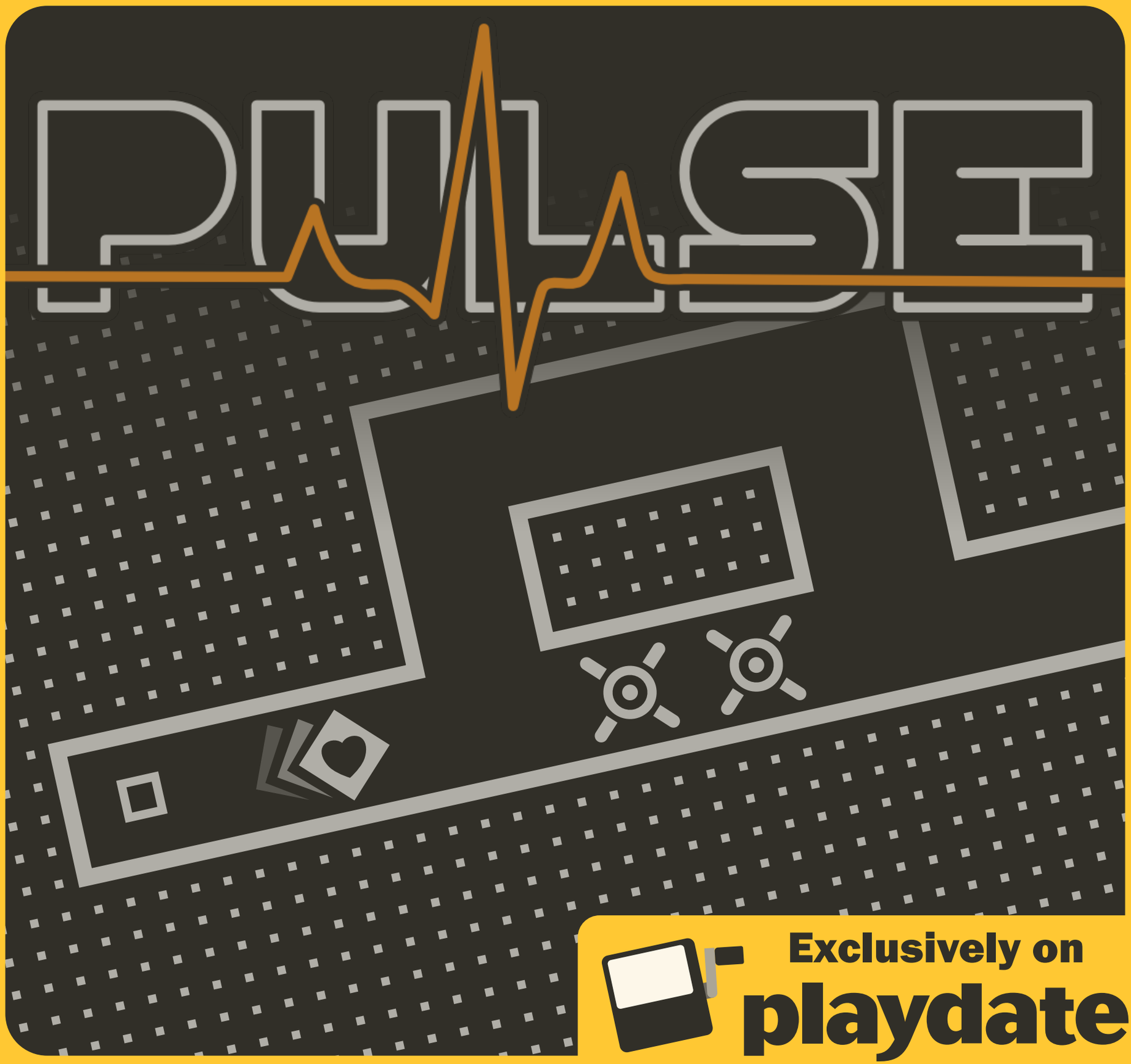

PULSE
Exclusively on
playdate

Contents

1. Starting the Game
2. How to Play
3. Stage Features
4. Practice Mode
5. High Scores
6. User Settings
7. Tips and Tricks
8. Credits

Tip: Pulse is a simple enough game that you can probably figure it out without reading this manual!

Starting the Game

When you open Pulse for the first time, you will be asked to enter a player name. This will be used in the high scores table, and can be changed in the User Settings screen, accessible from the main menu.

Once a user has been created, you will be presented with the title screen. From here you can press the Ⓐ button to begin the game from the beginning, or open the main menu by pressing the Ⓑ button and selecting 'Start Run'.

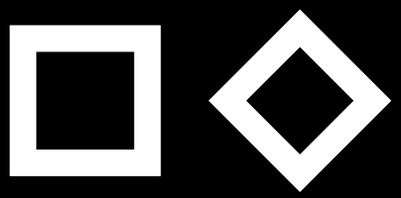
Tip: In most parts of the game, pressing the Ⓑ button will open up a menu.

How to Play

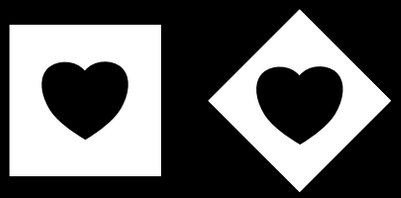
You goal in Pulse is to clear all of the game's 84 stages in one run. To do this you must quickly figure out the correct route through each stage and reach its exit within 10 seconds or the game will end.

As you progress through the stages you will encounter all kinds of stage features that will make it harder to quickly understand how to progress, but you will also find items that will help make your progress easier. These stage features and items are shown on the following page.

The player is controlled with the Playdate's D-Pad.

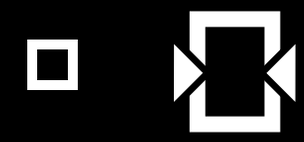


The player



The player
(with extra life)

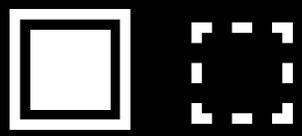
Tip: You can practice tough stages in Practice Mode!



Every stage has a start and an exit.

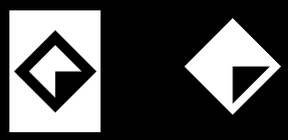
Locked doors can be opened with keys.

Clocks give you two more seconds.



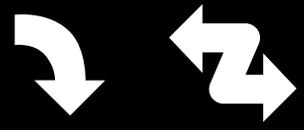
Moving walls can block you, or let you pass.

Switches operate moving walls, but some can only be pressed once.

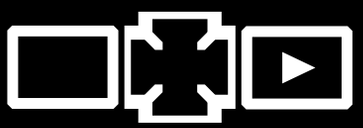


Gem doors reveal the exit only when all of the gems have been collected.

Mines end your run, but hearts give you another chance.



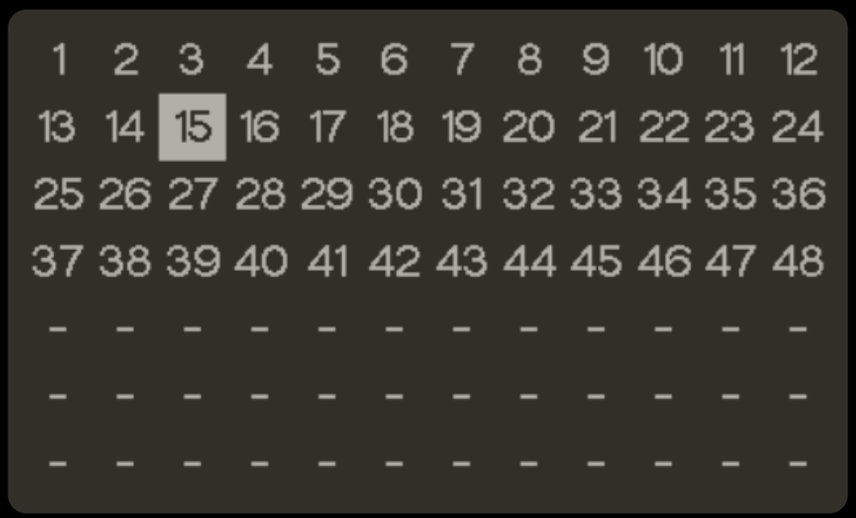
Some items rotate or reverse your controls.



Pipes transport you instantly, but take care to check the destination before you travel.

Practice Mode

In practice mode, you can replay stages that you have unlocked in order to get better at them and avoid making mistakes on your runs. You can enter practice mode by opening the menu on the title screen by pressing the Ⓑ button and selecting 'Practice Mode'.



You can either practice single stages, or practice a sequence of stages by selecting 'Play From Here' from the menu available by pressing the Ⓑ button.

Stages become available in practice mode as you make progress in your runs. They unlock in groups of 12 stages when you reach the first stage of that group.

High Scores

If you perform well playing the main game, your run will be recorded and displayed on the Best Runs screen.

Runs are ranked first by the stage reached, then by time taken (less time is better). Lives used is also shown with the run data, but does not affect the ranking.

Each stage also has a best time associated with it, which can be seen when entering the stage during a run or in practice mode. After the stage is cleared, the game will show whether a new record time was achieved, and by how much it differed from the previous best.

Online Ranking

Each time you complete a run, the game will attempt to register your score online. It is important to note that online ranking is ranked only by the *score* calculated from the stage reached and the time taken.

You can convert between time and score using the menu that appears when the Ⓑ button is pressed. Time shown on the Online Ranking page will be approximate, since online ranking only stores scores, and some accuracy is lost when converting from score to time.

Only run scores are registered to online leaderboards; Stage times are local to your Playdate.

Rank Card

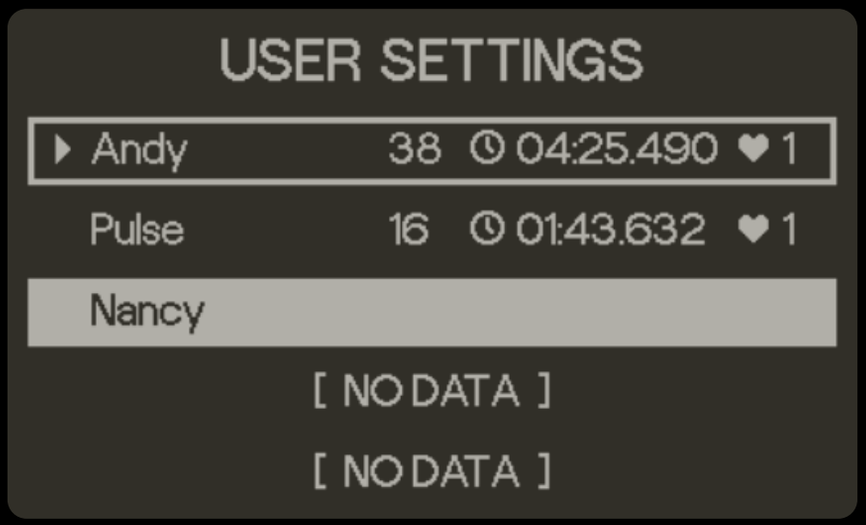
Shortly after completing a run, the rank card will appear if your Playdate is connected to WiFi. This is because the game registers the score for your run online and gets the rank for that score.

The rank card can be dismissed by pressing any button. Your online rank is also displayed in the lower left corner of the title screen.

Tip: Online Ranking and the Rank Card are features only available in version 1.02 or later of Pulse. Please update to the latest version to access them.

User Settings

The user settings screen allows you to create, delete and rename users. You can select from existing users by highlighting the user name and pressing Ⓐ. The selected user will be used by the game when entering runs in the high score table and for showing how many stages are available in practice mode.



To erase all of your game data, open the menu by pressing the Ⓑ button and select 'Delete ALL Data'. This will delete all users, best runs shown in the high scores and stage records and set everything to default.

Tips and Tricks

Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of Pulse.

Tip: In order to get the best stage times, you may find it easier to put the Playdate on a table or flat surface and use both of your index fingers to operate the D-pad.

Tip: The control rotating items in particular can make stages that seem easy much more difficult to clear. Use practice mode to get a feel for how these items affect the controls, and remember that getting the same one twice is the same as flipping the controls.

Trick: To unlock all levels in Practice Mode, rotate the crank so that it points upwards from the Playdate's screen, and select 'Practice Mode' on the title menu while holding up on the D-pad. This will not affect your save data.

Credits

Pulse was created by Andrew Palmer, Summer 2022

Pulse was originally intended to be a very short project to learn the ropes of Lua and Playdate development. At some point in development I decided that one of the goals would be to finish and publish the game on Itch.io, and although it is a relatively simple game, it ended up being a lot more work to create than I had initially anticipated.

The following software was used:

Sublime Text: All Lua code.
Pyxel Edit: In-game graphics.
Affinity Designer: Logo, promotional art, manual, etc.
Blender: Title screen logo (exported to points)

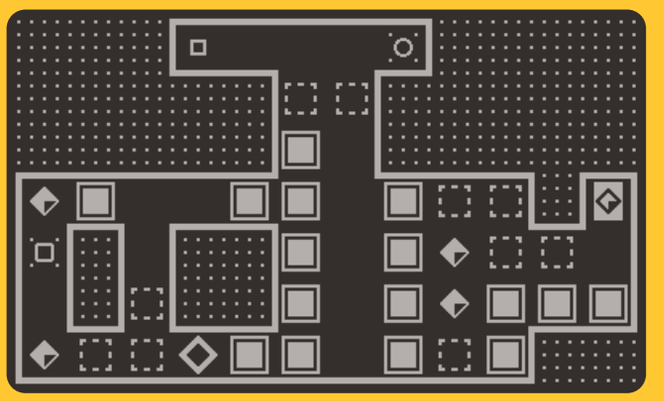
Thanks to Panic for making the Playdate, along with its lovely SDK and simulator.

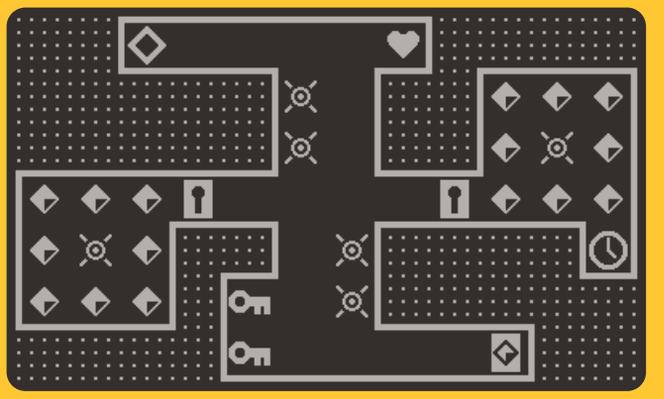
Thanks to YOU for buying and playing Pulse! ❤

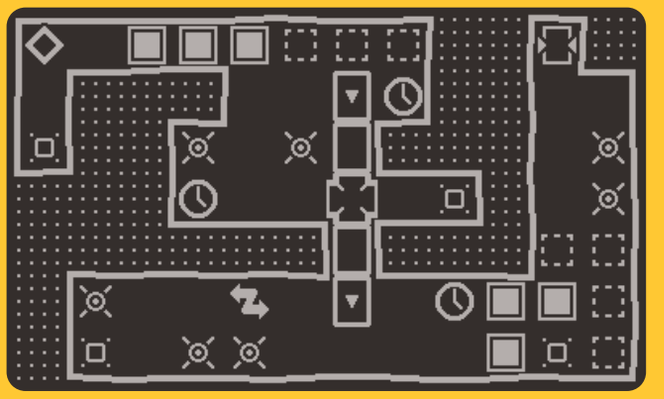
Notes

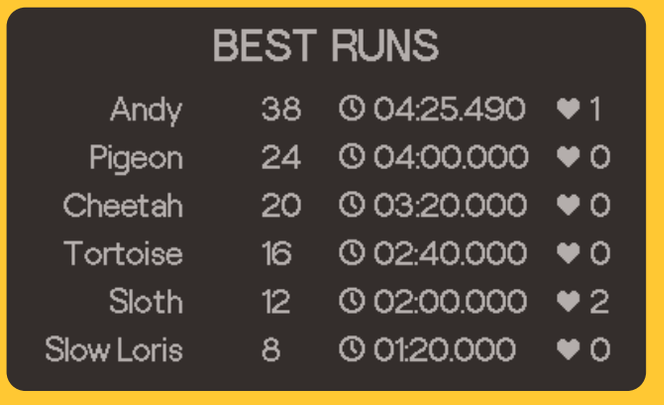
Pulse is a stripped down action-puzzle game made exclusively for Playdate.

Your goal is to clear all 84 stages in a single run. On each stage, you must rush to the exit before the time limit expires, and failure will end your run. Your tool for accomplishing this feat is the humble D-pad.







Features

- 84 stages from easy to evil
- Practice mode so you don't fail tough stages on your runs
- Local high score table!
- Five user slots. Compete with your friends and family!
- Simple theme that is easy to see on the Playdate's screen