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NOTE: This help file doesn't contain information about ZRF syntax or how to create your own games. See the *langref.chm* file for this information.

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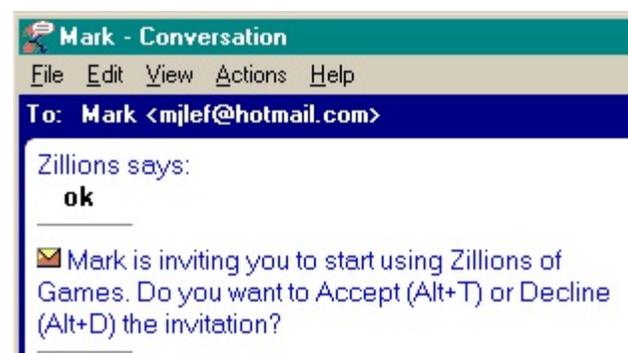
Connecting Through MSN Messenger

Zillions of Games can be launched by **MSN Messenger** or **Windows Messenger**, instant messaging programs currently available for free from Microsoft. This can be a simpler way to start a net session, because Messenger will exchange the IP addresses automatically.

As long as you have run Zillions of Games on the computer at least once previously, "Start Zillions of Games..." should appear in the Actions menu. Also, when you are having a one-on-one conversation with someone, a button for "Start Zillions of Games" will be present under "I want to..." as shown below:



When you are in a conversation, click "Start Zillions of Games" to invite another person to a game. (You will be hosting it.) The other person will receive an invitation in the Messenger chat window, such as:



Click on "Accept" or hit Alt-T to accept the challenge.



Zillions of Games will now automatically start up on both machines and attempt to connect.

See also: [Joining or Hosting a Net Session](#) and [Common Net-play Problems](#)

Common Net-Play Problems

NATs and Routers

NATs, or Network Address Translators, are used to share a single Internet Protocol (IP) address between multiple machines. This means that a machine's internal IP address will be different from its external IP address. Routers may act as NATs.

Most NATs cause problems for peer-to-peer games like Zillions of Games. There seems to be no standard for NAT traversal to ensure peer/peer apps will be able to resolve addresses. Zillions uses DirectPlay® technology which supports the UPnP Gateway Extensions for NAT traversal; however, many NAT vendors do not yet support these extensions. Internet Connection Sharing (ICS) in Windows XP or Me is UPnP-compliant and therefore compatible with net-play. ICS in older versions of Windows is not.

Most problems will occur when hosting behind a NAT. Therefore, the rule to follow if possible is:

*If you are behind a NAT, **join** the game rather than **host** it.*

In some cases, explicitly configuring the NAT to forward ports may also allow hosting behind a NAT. You can attempt to enable port forwarding for the DPNSVR port 6073 and Zillions' game port. Zillions will usually select port 2302 for the game port, but if there are other DirectPlay applications running, it will select the next sequential port number available (for example, 2303). You should consult the documentation for the NAT you are using for information on setting up port forwarding.

Note Most NATs do not support enumeration through the DPNSVR port for client applications. This is because the client sends initial outbound traffic to the DPNSVR port, but the reply comes from the game port. Clients can attempt to enable port forwarding for the game port, but like servers, this design limits the user to only one client behind the NAT.

Firewalls

Applications work best when not behind a firewall or proxy. Firewalls can block the ports which Zillions uses to communicate.

Windows XP Internet Connection Firewall

Zillions uses DirectPlay, which works with the Internet Connection Firewall (ICF) capabilities of Windows XP. When Zillions begins hosting, enumerating, or connecting, the appropriate ports will automatically open and when your application shuts down, these ports will automatically close. However, you must be a member of the administrator group for your computer, so that DirectPlay has the security permissions to open the ports.

Third-Party Firewalls

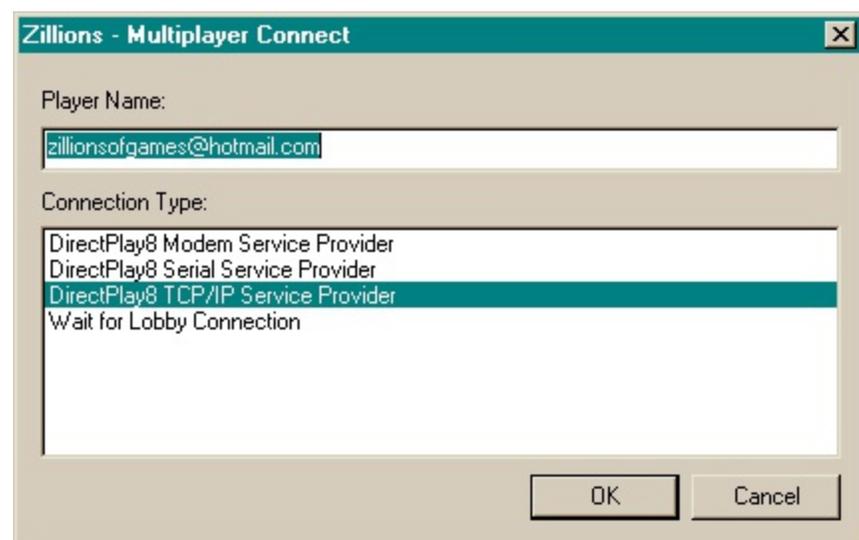
DirectPlay is unable to configure third-party firewalls automatically. To support a host behind a third-party firewall, you will have to manually configure your firewall. You can attempt to open the DPNSVR port 6073 and the game port. Zillions usually selects port 2302 for the game port, but if there are other DirectPlay applications running, it will select the next sequential port number available (for example, 2303). You should consult your firewall's documentation for information on opening ports. Another option is to disable the firewall altogether during net-play. As most problems occur for the hosting player, we advise that if one player has a firewall, that player should join the game rather than host it.

Joining or Hosting a Net Session

It is possible to play a friend over the Internet using DirectX technology. One player must "host" the session, while the player "joins" the session that the first player is "hosting". Once the players are connected, they may play any number of games.

Step 1: Choosing the Connection

Choose **Join/Host Session** from the **Net** menu. The following dialog will appear:

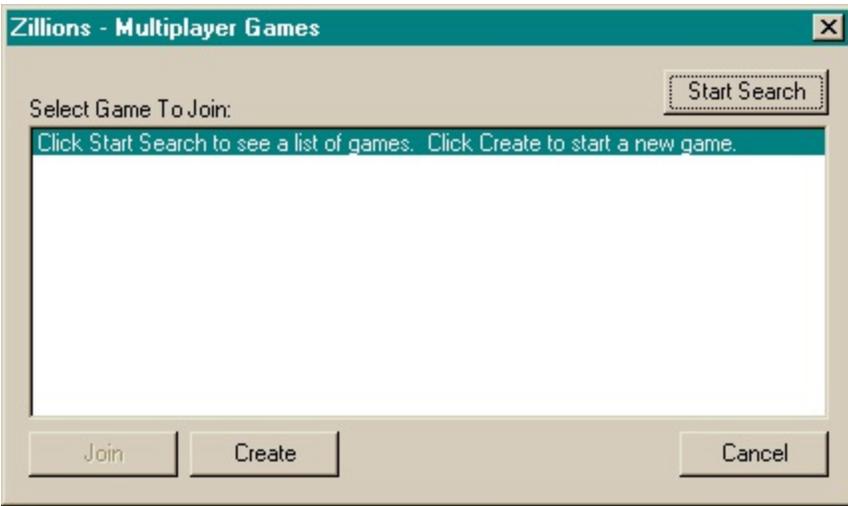


Player Name - The name or "handle" you'll be known by during the session. You can use any name. (It does not have to be an email address as shown here.)

Connection Type - The kind of network that you want to play on. Some typical choices:

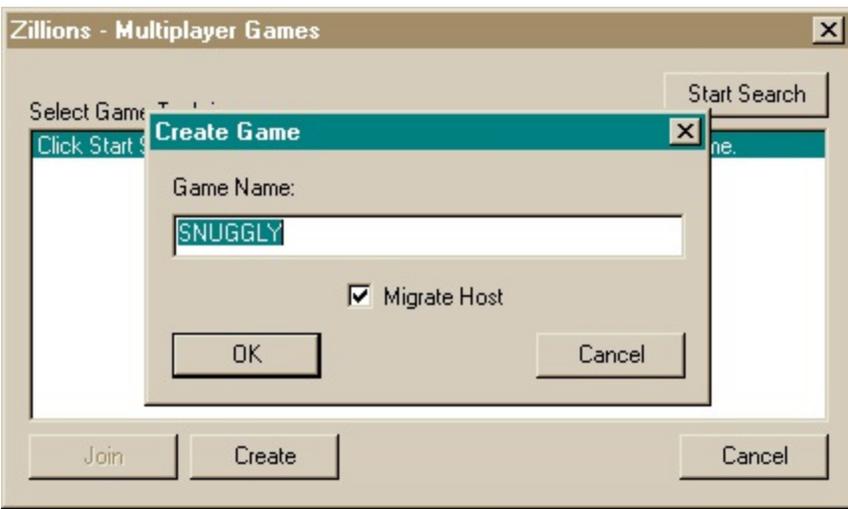
- **DirectPlay8 Modem Service Provider** - Direct connection between modems over a phone line. In this case, the Host will automatically have his machine set to answer the incoming modem call.
- **DirectPlay8 Serial Service Provider** - Use this if you have a direct cable connection via the COM ports. You will need to select the appropriate COM port as well as match communication speeds and settings. Note that some older computers may have trouble communication at high speed. In this case, simply choose a lower Baud Rate.
- **DirectPlay8 TCP/IP Service Provider** - The most common option, this lets you play against anyone else with Zillions loaded and who is connected on the Internet.

After selecting the Connection Type and clicking **OK**, the following dialog will appear:



Step 2: Hosting a Session

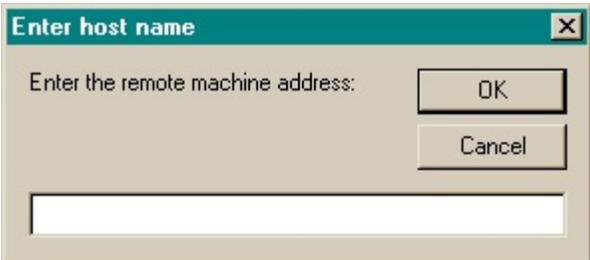
To host a session, click the **Create** button. This will bring up the **Create Game** dialog.



Enter a name for the session (any will do) and click **OK**. Your machine will now be hosting a gaming session that a friend can join.

Alternate Step 2: Joining a Session

Instead of clicking **Create** to create a new game session, you can search for existing sessions to join. Click the **Start Search** button. Then enter in the IP address of the hosting player in the **Host Name** dialog that appears:

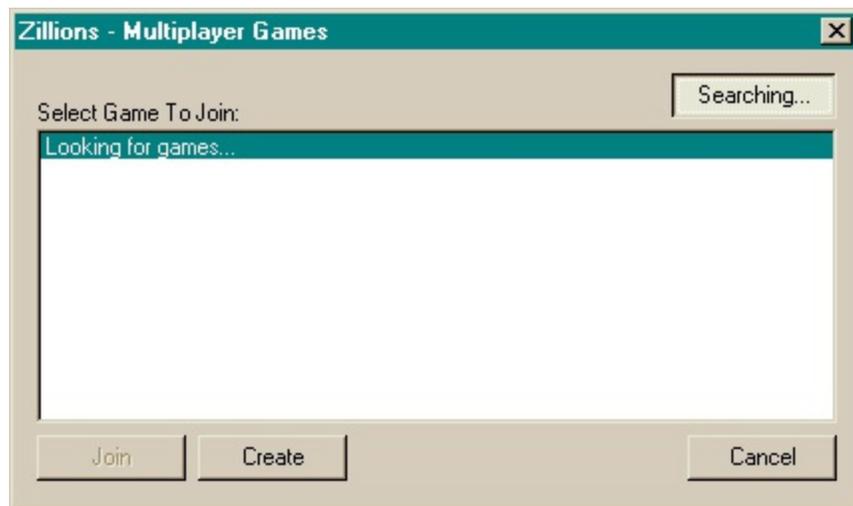


What is an "IP address"?

An IP address is a unique Internet routing number that identifies every machine on the Internet. The hosting player should send the joining player their IP address prior to play. A player can see his current IP address through the [Net-Session Status](#). For example, the following Session Status dialog shows that the (hosting) player's IP address is 63.249.99.252. The joining player would enter this number into the **Host Name** dialog.



Once you have entered in the host's IP address, Zillions will look for game sessions being hosted at that address. This may take a while, depending on the speed of the connection.

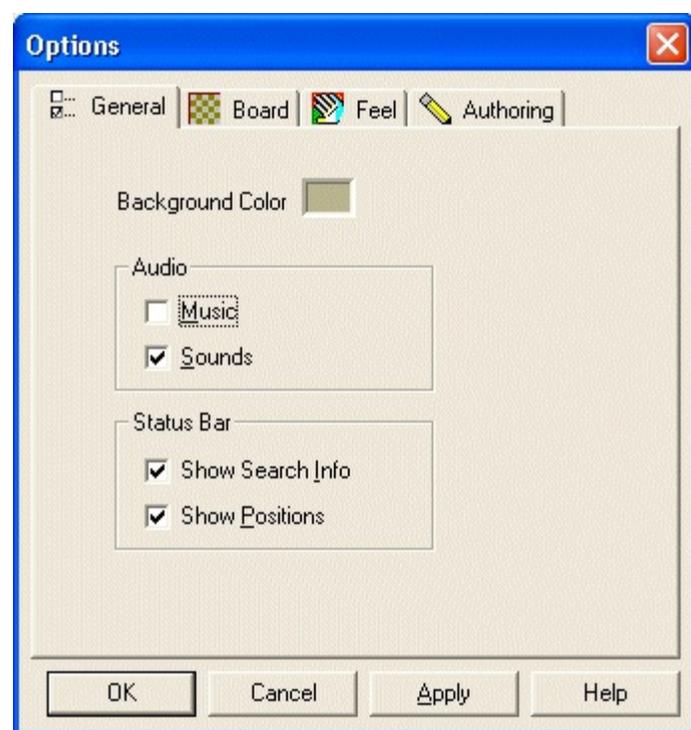


Once a session is found, it will be listed along with its latency (connection speed). Select the session and click the **Join** button to join it.

See also: [Connecting through MSN Messenger](#) and [Common Net-Play Problems](#)

General Options Tab

Allows you to set general options.



Use this dialog box to set the following options:

Background Color - Clicking here brings up a standard Windows Color dialog. The color chosen is displayed in the main window, outside of the board.

Show Animation on Startup - When checked, the program will play an opening animation before taking you to the opening game display panel. *This option only appears in certain versions.*

Music - When checked, the program will play background music.

Sounds - When checked, the program will play sounds while animating piece movements. This will alert you to the fact that computer is moving.

Show Search Info - When checked, Zillions will display extra search information in the Status Bar. This will show which move Zillions currently thinks is best and which moves it is currently examining.

Show Positions - When checked, Zillions will show in the Status Bar the name of the current position the mouse is over.

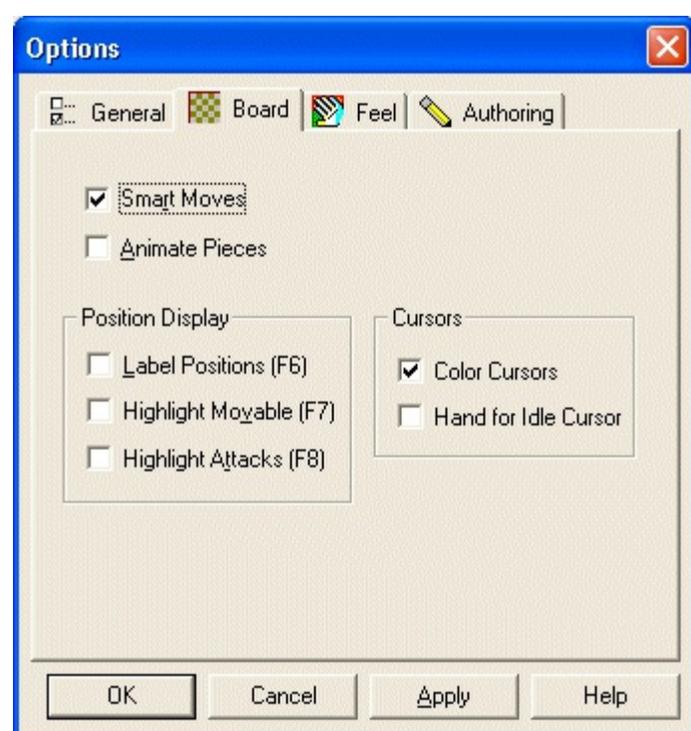
Apply - makes the changes immediately.

Help - brings up this page in the documentation.

The tabs at the top take you to [Board Options](#), [Feel Options](#), or [Authoring Options](#).

Board Options Tab

Controls options related to the game board.



Smart Moves - When checked, this option will make single click move entry possible on many moves. Click on a piece with only one legal move and Zillions makes it immediately for you. Or, click on a position that only one piece can move to and Zillions will make that move!

Animate Pieces - When checked, Zillions will animate piece movements. If not checked, pieces will simply "pop" directly to their destinations.

Board Display: Label Positions (F6) - Overlays the names of the positions on the board. Pressing the F6 will toggle this highlighting temporarily.

Board Display: Highlight Movable (F7) - Highlights the movable pieces ("from" positions) in blue and "drop" positions in yellow. Pressing the F7 will toggle this highlighting temporarily.

Board Display: Highlight Attacks (F8) - Highlights the "to" positions that attack an enemy piece (in red) and "to" positions that don't attack (in gray). Pressing the F8 will toggle this highlighting temporarily.

Cursors: Color Cursors - When checked, color cursors will be used. The option to turn off color cursors is provided because some older systems may not support color cursors well. If your cursors appear a ghastly gray rather than flesh colored, or are flickery, especially when dragging a piece, your machine does not provide good support for this feature and you can uncheck this to switch cursors to black-and-white.

Cursors: Hand for Idle Cursor - When checked a hand is used for the idle cursor. When unchecked a standard arrow is used.

Apply - makes the changes immediately.

Help - brings up this page in the documentation.

The tabs at the top take you to [General Options](#), [Feel Options](#), or [Authoring Options](#).

Feel Options Tab

Controls the touch sensations of Zillions when used with a mouse or trackball supporting [Immersion](#) TouchSense™ technology, such as the iFeel™ Force Feedback mice from [Logitech](#). The name of the connected device is displayed at the top of the dialog. If no device is detected, this tab won't appear.



The following checkboxes toggle on and off the feel sensations in Zillions.

Wins, losses, draws - the sensation when a game is won, lost, or drawn.

Selection screens - the feel of tiles in the selection screen as well as positions in a game with only drop moves.

Drops - the feel associated with dropping a new piece on the board.

Piece dragging - the weight of the piece as it is dragged.

Board edge when dragging - the boundaries around where you may drag a piece. *This is only displayed for certain devices that support constraining force feedback*

Captures - a buzz when a piece is captured.

"Change" moves - the feel of a piece changing color (flipping) or type (promoting).

Legal move destinations - the feel of the positions where you can drag a piece to (as indicated by green circles on the board).

Smart moves - the pull of "Smart Moves" as a piece is slid.

Board edits - the feel of adding, deleting, or changing a piece on a position.

Board Positions: Center Pull - the attraction to the position. Click is the "pop" that is made as the cursor enters the position. These forces may be adjusted from weak to strong. To turn them off entirely use the checkboxes for "Feel selection screen" and "Feel

legal move destinations". *This is only displayed for certain devices that support constraining force feedback.*

Board Positions:Click - defines how strongly positions are felt. Only tiles on the selection screen and the legal move destinations have these touch sensations.

Apply - makes the changes immediately.

Help - brings up this page in the documentation.

Session Status Dialog

Use the **Net** menu's **Join/Host Session** to begin connecting to another player. After selecting a Connection Type and filling in any needed information, the first player should **Create** a game session to **host**. The second player can then **Join** that session.

If you are starting a session using **DirectPlay8 TCP/IP Service Provider**, you can use **Net - Session Status** to get your current IP address.

When you host a TCP/IP game (see [Joining or Hosting a Net Session](#) for help on how to do this) and then choose **Net - Session Status** to see your status, the dialog box below will appear:



You can select and **Copy** text from this window. You can then send this address via a chat, pager program, or email to your intended opponent. This IP address is what the joining player will use to establish the connection.