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Introduction

Zuma Blitz is a popular game from PopCap and the successor to Bejeweled Blitz. It involves matching groups of three balls and preventing them from getting over to the end. In the normal game you would need to keep making matches and score enough points so you can clear all of the balls. However in Blitz there is no limit to how many balls that appear, just a time limit of one minute. Unlike Bejeweled Blitz, where you have exactly one minute (and five extra with a power), the time in Zuma Blitz is quite flexible, going up to three minutes in length.

The distinguishing feature about Zuma Blitz is its replayability compared to Bejeweled Blitz. One is adding a level system. Similar to games like Modern Warfare 2, various perks are given to you as you play more games and gain more experience. Additionally boards are not static; each week, in addition to high scores being reset and medals given out, a new board is released every week, causing you to shift strategies and think differently. You may have a easy time on one board, but not on another.

In competitive terms, many groups exist that keep track of high scores. Formerly Club Mojo, mentioned by Popcap in interviews, maintained a weekly Top 50 leaderboard. However, it has been unable to accurately keep track of last minute high scores due to the new time of the board change (at 4pm Tuesdays) so the idea of high score tracking was left to many smaller groups, such as the Quetzalcoatl Aurum Top 30, seeking to bring the best players into a form of competitive Zuma Blitz gaming.

In my opinion, as the owner of a blog that has attracted tens of thousands of players, I provide some of the best strategies to date for any player, whether casual or hardcore, to greatly improve their score.

Disclaimer: All of the graphics contained in this manual are taken from the game, however I wrote most of the tips in this guide. I wrote it for helping all of the users of the game, and I didn't write it because someone asked me to; it was because many people wanted some very good tips.

1. Basic Rules

NOTE: Take a look at the help button if you need more help on how the game works. You will be automatically given a video tutorial if you are playing for the first time.

1. You start with a frog in the middle, and you will need to shoot balls in order to make groups of three or more, which they will disappear and you will score points.



2. Prevent balls from reaching the skull, it will end the game if balls reach the end of the curve.
3. You have one minute to score as many points as possible.
4. How you get to the top of the leaderboard is up for you to decide. Note: luck and skill required.

2. Game Diagrams

As of May 2011, a typical Zuma Blitz game will have the following elements: (see next page)



- [1] – Life. Each game that you start costs one heart to play, whether or not you complete the game.
- [2] – Reset. This abandons the current game and takes you back to the title screen. Any progress in the game is lost and you will not get any XP or mojo (it is not better than a death, which you will still get some XP and mojo depending on the balls cleared up to before you died). You will need to confirm before resetting.
- [3] – Score. Your current number of points in the game. Note that the score is not 100% accurate if you make matches during the first three seconds of a game, but the final results screen shows the correct number of points. (An update in June 2011 switches to the score much faster so it's much less likely to happen.)
- [4] Help.
- [5] Options.
- [6] Pause Game. You can unpause by either clicking this icon or spacebar.
- [7] Hot Frog Meter. Introduced at lvl 3, this shows your progress towards Hot Frog. This meter affects the number of points you gain from normal matches (see Scoring Mechanics)
- [8] Time. Time remaining before the game ends. Version 70 (June 29, 2001) made the font size for the timer and multiplier smaller.
- [9] Multiplier: The number of points your matches are multiplied by. An x2 will give you double the amount of points for matching shots than a x1 multiplier.
- [10] Multiplier Ball. Match this ball up to increment your multiplier by 1.
- [11] Chain: Shows your current chain.
- [12] Frog: Your frog. The back of the frog shows your ball reserve, right click or press spacebar to alternate between your current ball in your mouth and the one in your reserve. (the back of your frog)
- [13] Time Ball. Match this ball up to add five seconds to your timer.
- [14] Death Skull. If any ball reaches this spot *after* balls slide back from matches made, your frog is eaten (typically called a death) and the game ends. Note that the ball must be directly on top of the skull to be considered a death.



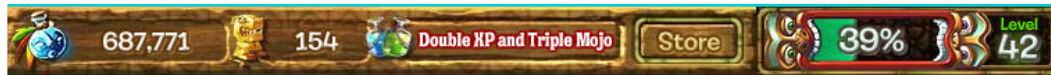
Not a death, yellow ball slides back.

- [15] Shows your current high score for this week's board.
- [16] Double XP and Triple Mojo Potion timers, if they are activated. They either show a 24 hour timer (such as 6:00) indicating how much time of your potion is left, or a number (35) indicating the amount of games left before it expires.
- [17] Any powers being used in the game.
- [18] Time left before the current tournament ends, and the next tournament begins with its respective board. After this timer hits 0, you will be forced to refresh.

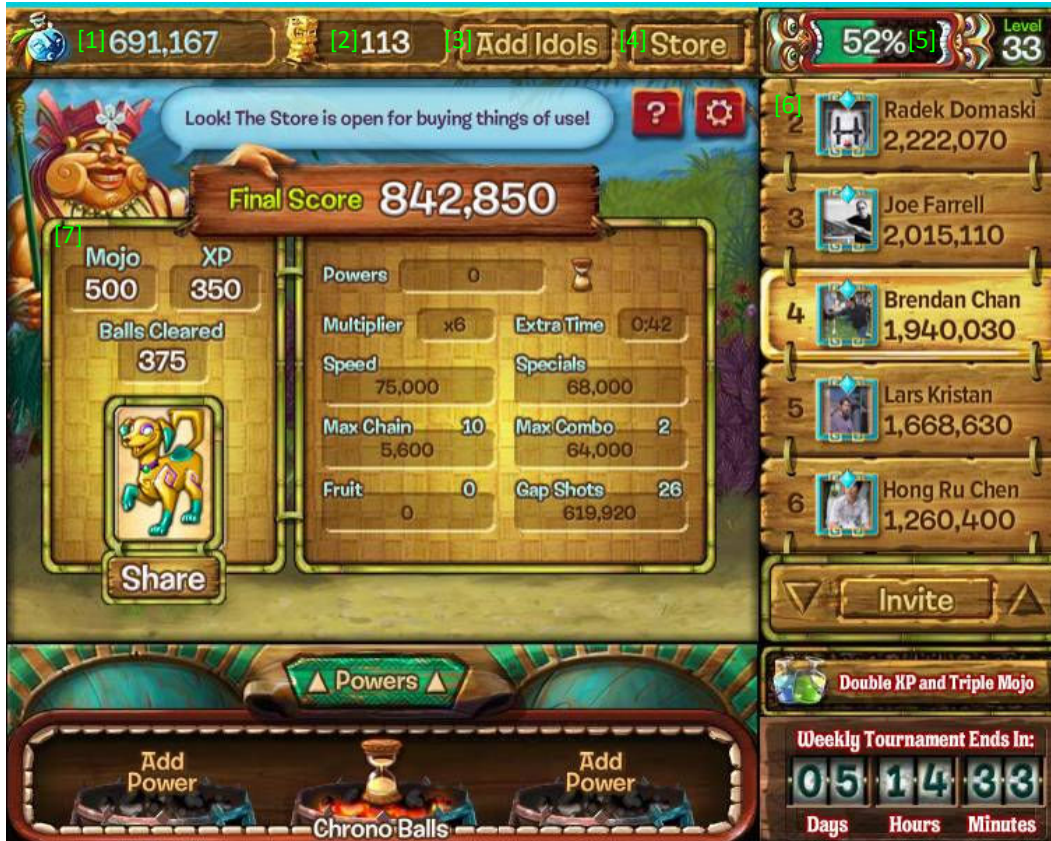
Results screen (Prior to May 2011) – Prior to January 2011 the second panel didn't exist.



Top Bar (June 2011)



Results Screen (May 2011)



- [1] Your mojo count. Can be increased by either completing games, grabbing mojo from friend's wall posts, or by buying them using idols.
- [2] Your idol count. Can be increased by either leveling up, purchasing them using Facebook Credits, or from friend's wall post feeds (including Totally 80's club links)
- [3] Add idols using this button. (Hint: They cost Facebook Credits)
- [4] Buy various potions, unlimited play, and other exclusive powers.
- [5] Percent experience towards the next level. It is rounded down to the nearest percent point and confuses many users. Upon reaching lvl 80 you have the option to pursue mastery.
- [6] Leaderboard, listing your friend's scores. Getting on to the top three will get you a medal.
- [7] XP and Mojo gained for the game. (or round, as you might call it if you're playing a lot of games). Mojo and XP is based on balls cleared, but it's not linear. See Appendix A for a ratio.

Powers: Points gained from Bombs, Cannon, Chain Blast, Last Hurrah.

Extra Time: How much extra time you received in the game. See note (1).

Speed: Points gained from normal matches and respective speed bonuses.

Specials: Points gained from Hot Frog, Curve Clear, and Criticals. See note (2)

Max Chain: Points gained from chain bonuses and max chain.

Max Combo: Points gained from combo bonuses and max combo

Fruit: Points gained from gathering fruit.

Gap Shots: Points gained from gap shots.

Some minor things to note:

(1) The extra time is based on the amount of time balls you collected. If you died prematurely via a skull this value would obviously be wrong.

(2) Critical only shows extra points from speed bonuses, chains, and combos, not from gap shots.

Example: you make a perfect gapshot hitting four balls with a near full hot frog meter and a x5 multiplier. You get $(130 * 4 + 10000) * 5 = 52,600$ points.

A critical hit will net you twice as many points, giving you a total of 105,200 points for that shot.

The breakdown is different however. Without the critical, 2,600 points goes into the speed category and 50,000 points goes into the gap shot category.

With the critical, 2,600 points goes into the speed category, but 2,600 goes into the specials category as well (in the critical hits subcategory), and 100,000 points goes into the gap shot category, instead of 50,000 going to gap shots and 52,600 points gained from critical hits.

(3) The 'Share' button in the newer results screen rocks slightly back and forth when hovering over it.

3. Ways to score points

Please refer to the appendix for more details on the scoring mechanics.

Basic Matching

Match groups of three balls to clear them from the screen. They are normally worth 10 points per ball, but their point value increases based on your speed bonus and multipliers.



Combo Shot

When balls are matched up, if it would cause another match when balls slide back, you receive a combo bonus. 1,000 points are gained for performing a successful combo, 2,000 for the next, etc. The bigger the combo, the further balls are pushed back, and the longer they are slowed down.



Ball is matched up here...



...yellow balls slide back for a combo.

Chain Shot

Making six or more consecutive matches in a row without missing gives you a small chain bonus. In addition to points gained from clearing balls, you get a chain bonus of 200 points plus 10 more after that (so a 10x chain gives you 240 extra points, 15x gives you 290 extra points, etc.)

Gap Shot

Gap Shots are the most common tool essential to producing high scores. The smaller the gap, the more points you will earn. Its large increase in value (up to 10k points) compared to 500 in other Zuma games means that your success in the leaderboard depends on whether or not you can find a way to get a lot of them. There are many strategies that allow you to keep churning out high-value gap shots. See Gap Shot Tricks. (Note: occasionally gap shots may count as double gaps, or none at all.)



Fruit

Introduced at level 6, fruit appears in areas where access typically requires breaking through one or two layers of balls. They last for a short time before they disappear. Each fruit collected will increase the point value of subsequent fruit collected.

Explosions

Starting with Hot Frog at level 3, and Bombs at Level 5, explosions can knock out a huge amount of balls on the screen for a relatively low point value. Normal explosions are seven balls in diameter.



Curve Clear

If you completely clear a curve (typically through the use of hot frog), you will get a large bonus, and balls will come back into play rapidly. there is typically a small distance balls must reach before you can get a curve clear bonus again on the same curve.

Critical Hit

Introduced at level 14, you have a small percent chance (1-10%, depending on your level) that your current shot will be worth twice as many point as usual. Your screen will flash 'Critical!' over your frog.

Multiplier and Time Ball

In addition to giving you more points than a regular match, the multiplier increases the score of any future matches you make, while time gives you more time to make matches. Time balls appear on average every 11.5 seconds (7.5-17s), while multipliers appear on average every 15 seconds (4.5-29s).

4. Powers

Powers turn the tide of gameplay for the better, pointwise. Each power costs mojo to use per game.



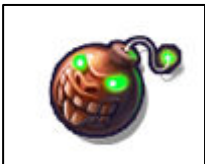
Time Balls: This time ball becomes your first powerup ball you unlock at level 2 alongside multiplier balls. Your 'one minute game' isn't just a minute anymore, it's much longer than that. You normally get 5 seconds per ball, but this can be increased later on via powers.



Bombs: Costs 500 mojo per game. Bomb powerups start appearing on the game screen over normal balls. Once matched, destroys any ball within a seven ball diameter (175 pixels). Unlocked at level 5. Remember, only three of them can be on the screen at one time.



Tiki Bombs: Starting at level 38, tiki bombs replaced normal bombs. They appear more often (around 33% more), but their price is doubled at 1000 mojo a game.



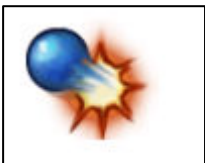
Voodoo Bombs: Available at level 59, the more potent Voodoo Bombs have the same frequency as Tiki Bombs, but they produce a larger explosion radius (eight balls in diameter). It does come at a price of a large mojo cost (2000 per game), however.



Last Hurrah: Costs 500 mojo per game. Once matched, two spirits come from the skulls to the start of the curve, and any powerups in their way are detonated with a five ball explosion radius, activating their effects. Available at level 7.



Mega Hurrah: At level 41, your Last Hurrah gets upgraded with double the mojo cost (1000 per game). However your points per explosion double as well. Despite that increase, you still don't get a lot of points overall, so don't expect to climb up the leaderboard with this.



Speed Shot: Increases the speed of your shots by 10%, costing 500 mojo a game. Not much but it could help when you are nearing max speed.



Super Speed: Increases the speed of your shots by 20%, and raises the cost to 1000 mojo a game. Shots speeds start to get more noticeable.



Warp Speed: Increases the speed of your shots by 30%, and further increases the cost to 2000 mojo a game. Despite their claims at balls flying at ludicrous speed, they are still not that fast.



Cannonball: Starting at level 16, it allows you to fire a controllable three way cannonball destroying any balls, powerups, and fruit in the way. Your hot frog meter is frozen while you shoot. It takes a while before another of these powerups appears again. Costs 1000 mojo a game.



Cannon King: Cannon powerups appear 33% more often than usual, which means more time with the Cannon. It doesn't help much with points, though. It's 2000 mojo a game though, and might make gap-sized holes at longer distances. Your cannon power is automatically upgraded at level 46.



Super Cannon: Available at level 69, this modified cannon fires four of them, and cost 4000 mojo a game to use. Make the most out of this powerup and combine Hot Frog with Cannon. Tip: Don't expect to create small gaps when using this powerup.



Inferno Frog: Starting at level 19, this power allows you to fire four hot frog shots in a row. It costs 750 mojo per game to use.



Sun Frog: This upgrades the inferno frog at level 50 and adds one extra shot, allowing you to fire five hot frog shots in a row. Now you have the power to clear an extremely long curve or a few short ones.



Fruit Master: At level 23, this powerup becomes unlocked. Fruit appears somewhat more often by around 25%. At this stage the powerup doesn't make much of a difference. Costs 750 mojo a game.



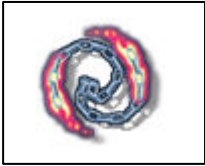
Juicy Fruit: makes fruit appear 50% more often. You get this at level 53 for 1,500 mojo a game.



Epic Fruit: makes fruit appear twice as often. For a cost of 3,000 mojo, you can easily reach the max score for fruit. It might be expensive, but this makes up over a million points for good level 80 players.



Chain Blast: At level 27, this powerup is unlocked. For a mere 1,000 mojo a game, it causes a small explosion at x10 chain, and every x5 chain after that.



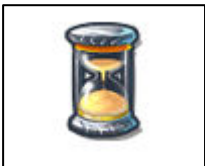
Super Chain: This becomes available at level 56 for 2,000 mojo a game. It causes an explosion at x19 and every x4 chain after that. Caution is advised when rapid firing and expecting make two matches in close proximity; the chain explosion from the first match that destroys nearby balls may cause your second shot to miss.



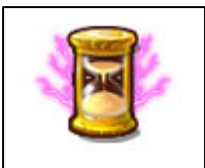
Mega Chain: At level 75, this power increases the chain explosion radius to that of a Voodoo Bomb. This powerup is extremely underused because it's 4,000 mojo a game and lots of speed is required to put it to use, which makes it less effective for slower players.



Chrono Balls: This power becomes unlocked at level 30. With a cost of 1,000 mojo a game, it adds 1 more second for each time ball collected, for a total of six seconds. It might not be much, but it adds around 20% more time on average to your game.



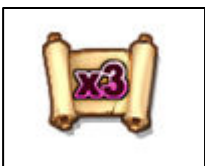
Tempus Fugit: At level 66, your chrono balls get upgraded to Tempus Fugit (latin for 'time flies'). For 2,000 mojo a game, it adds two more seconds to time balls (total of 7 seconds). One minute of extra time is common with this power, but on average 70% more time is gained with this power.



Timelord: At level 77, this is where the value of time balls increases dramatically. Its cost is 4,000 mojo, one of the most expensive powers per game, but it is hands down one of the best powers available, and a must-use for any high scoring game. It gives you eight seconds per time ball, and can double (and sometimes triple) your game time. Some games last so long near the end that the gods playing the drums near the end of the game eventually got tired and stopped abruptly.



Multiplier: The last power (or not, if you bought it at a steep price of 150 idols) unlocks, costing you 1,000 mojo a game. Your multiplier starts at x2.



Multi Multiplier: At level 79, your multiplier power increases your starting multiplier to x3, costing 2,000 mojo a game. However there is still an x9 multiplier limitation.

Frog and Passive Upgrades



Spirit Animals: Keeps track of your point achievements, each with six circles of mastery, and unlocked over time. Personally, they should keep track of your scores even though you haven't unlocked that spirit animal for that score bracket yet.



Hot Frog: Starting at level 3, you can pick up speed bonuses by making matches quickly, and the speed of your balls will increase after each match once you've maxed out your speed bonus. Once the hot frog meter is full, you enter hot frog mode, can fire three explosive shots, emptying your hot frog meter in the process.



Life Container: It increases your number of hearts by 1, meaning you can play more games in a single session. You can accumulate a maximum of nine hearts at level 33. If you run out of hearts, you can get a refill via a coin flip once per day. (The first time you lose, however, you will get a refill, but it will cost 15 idols after that.)



Life Regen: Decreases the amount of time you have to wait before starting another game. The timer starts at 8 minutes but is upgraded up to a 6 minute wait per game at level 47.



Mojo Upgrade: The mojo upgrades permanently increases the amount of mojo you gain per game. You get 50% more mojo at level 20, 29, 40, 49, with the latter giving you 3x more mojo compared to level 1.



Critical Hit: One of the least understood upgrades, At level 14, it passively increases your score so that some shots at random are worth twice as much. There is a 1-10% chance of triggering this, with 10% being at level 74.



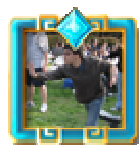
Fruit: It has a starting value of 3,000 points but will increase up to 5,100 points. They typically appear behind a layer of balls. Their score increases by 50% each time one is collected up to 3x its original value.



Treasure Chest: This replaces the first fruit in a game, and once this is hit, when you run out of time, you have a chance to spin the wheel. Prizes include decent sums of mojo (up to 8000) and idols (4 or 8), when additional slots are unlocked over time. If you bought them using idols, slot unlocks become 3x mojo potions instead.



Golden Frog: Achieved by reaching level 80, this upgrades your frog and increases your shot speed by 10%, and gives you a nice new look. You don't get any more XP at this point, but you can pursue mastery as an excuse for the developers not raising the level cap to 100. This frog carries over through mastery mode.



Mastery Mode: It's originally supposed to be for bragging rights, but after many users declined this option because it would prevent them from getting top 3 for a while however, extra perks were added, such as bonus mojo, 24 hour life, and discounts on powers. At level 80, you can pursue mastery, giving 20k mojo to others and resetting to level 1, removing all benefits that you might have gotten from being at level 80, but keeping your mojo / idol count. You will keep anything bought using idols. This can be repeated up to six times.

(Note: Your profile picture will be used inside of the glowing frame.)

5. Good Powerup Combinations

Last Hurrah + Bombs + Cannon: It might produce a lot of explosions, but it leaves a lot of powerups available for the Last Hurrah to eat up, and it's effective when Ultimate Hurrah nets you 10k per powerup on screen at the end, which is actually worth more than matching up the powerups themselves.

Timelord + Multiplier + Epic Fruit: A must have for any game that you play. It's essentially the only three powerups you will need for a high score. The last one can be removed however if you're running low on mojo and fruit is hard to reach.

Timelord + Sun Frog + Bombs: A well made combination for curve clears. Watch out for a potential death by curve clear* on boards with shorter curves, though. Essential for rapid curve clears. Don't forget death by curve clear on shorter tracks though.

***Death by Curve Clear:** A video produced which demonstrates that if a curve is cleared enough times and the speed of the balls are fast enough, they can rapidly go from start to end in a few seconds, ending your game.

6. Basic Gameplay Tips and Concepts:

Turn off the distractions and resource hoggers

To prevent any gameplay lag, try to close as many browser windows/tabs as possible, as well as any other programs in the background. If not handled, can significantly slow down or freeze the game, sometimes at inconvenient times.

Fast play (mojo harvesting)

If you're playing games to harvest mojo, your best bet is to not use powerups (except for powers that cost zero mojo during happy hour) and go for curve clears. Since you're clearing as many balls as possible, gaps are not important. Combos can actually be harmful if they don't clear a curve as they decrease the speed of balls. If you're fast, you can expect around 800-1125 mojo per game at level 50+, and more with the 3x potion. Combine with a 24h life for best results.

Slow play (strategical analysis)

It can also be helpful to play slowly at the beginning of the game, form a strategy, and then go for it. Your gaps made at the beginning of a game doesn't matter much compared to late game, so you have plenty of time to form a strategy. Additionally you can also determine how the balls will react on a board and rethink your strategy appropriately.



The biggest 'gotcha' with the Splish Splash board is that your match may impact the other ball behind it. This frog got gap shot denied by not planning first.

Know your game plan before starting.

Like many computer and board games, if you don't have a strategy, you won't get far. Are you focusing on getting as many gaps as possible while keeping fruit open? Are you going for that risky but very rewarding double gap opportunity? Whatever it is, if you don't know what you are doing, chances are you won't get many points. Study the board, go for a strategy and stick to it. Don't go for gaps at one point then clearing everything in sight shortly after that within a game.

It's all about Luck

Since time balls and multiplier balls are random (they show up from 4-28 second intervals) as well as the ball rollout, you might need to play a lot of games in order to get the desired results. Don't give up, you might not have gotten the right combination of balls to get that large scoring opportunity that game, but that might change the next game around. You might find an early multiplier, or a bunch of time balls. Go for that high score!

Record and Replay

The best way to find out why you didn't earn so many points is to record and replay your video. There are free screen recorders out there. One of my recommendations is Hypercam 2. (see Appendix C on instructions on use) Watch yourself, and ask: What opportunities were there for gapshots but didn't take them immediately? Was there anything that could've been optimized, such as reducing waits between hitting balls? Were there any potential good matches you might've overlooked?

Priority on Fruit / Multiplier, then Time.

Since multipliers are very effective, it would be wise to go for them first. Only grab time balls if you are about to run out of time, especially with Timelord, where eight seconds makes a huge difference, and can turn into 24 in some games with substantial luck. If you're building a double gap (explained later), don't forget to grab those powerups, or you won't have enough time to use it effectively. Don't forget to make an attempt to grab multipliers even after they disappear; you can still get the multiplier if you manage to get it within a few seconds after it's gone. (For time balls, this is not the case.)

Fruit Gathering

The sooner you grab the fruit after it appears, the sooner the next one will show it. A pro player can grab around 10-15 fruit in one game at level 80 on their highest scores. Keep the opportunity to double tap at a fruit location so you can quickly grab it.

Share (small amounts of mojo)

I typically don't share very small amounts of mojo, but you should share 1,000 mojo and 1,500 mojo posts, and definitely any post that rewards idols and life refills. You are free to share fortune cookies; although there you will typically get mojo in the three digit range for each cookie, you are bound to find a 15k mojo bonus somewhere.

Leading your shots

Note that just pointing at the ball where you want it to go doesn't make your shots 100% accurate if your hot frog meter is low. Late in the game, when balls are moving fast, leading your shots is required.



The color of the line indicates if your frog was that color, what area you would hit if you fired the ball between a potential gap and the other curve was moving fast.

Put the next two balls in your head

If you're going for gapshots, put the order of the next two balls on your frog (example: red, blue) in your short term memory. You can either do a double tap, or you can plan out two moves / matches within a span of a second.

Don't be afraid to aim in the general direction.

You don't have to always look directly at the frog to know what colors are on it, nor do you have to look directly at where you're firing if precision is not important. You can generally use the corner of your eye to do that. If you're aiming through small gaps (with a small margin of error) you might want look at where you're aiming.

Count in your head or watch your chain meter when using Chain Blast.

In the event that you wish to use chain blast, *watch your chain meter closely*, especially when trying to make matches close to each other.



Fired a red, then a yellow about to go midair. Will it match?



Nope. The chain explosion just took out your match, and your chain.

Don't dawdle around with shots.

If you're waiting a few seconds for that group of balls to fall in the right place for a gap shot, you can always use your reserve ball to make matches on the other half of the field.

Don't be afraid of death

Remember the balls can touch the skull, just make sure they don't go directly over the mouth.

**You're still in the game.**

If you make a nice double gap or a good move, don't get too excited. You're still in the game, and you've got to remain focused until the end.



Real life scenario: Shortly after aiming a double gap, I would have to wait two seconds before the purple ball would roll into place for another double. My plan was to fire the blue ball somewhere else and hopefully get a yellow, which I didn't. I did get the purple match before the time ran out, though. After viewing the replay, I've overlooked a fruit on the bottom left that I could've gotten for some more points, since I wasn't looking directly at it. I moved back up to fifth place but was one double gap shy of moving to 4th :(

7. Gap Shot Strategies

We all know what gap shots are, but do you know how to make them effectively? Unlike other guides which focus more on chains and combos, this guide has more emphasis on gapshots.

Advantages of gapshots:

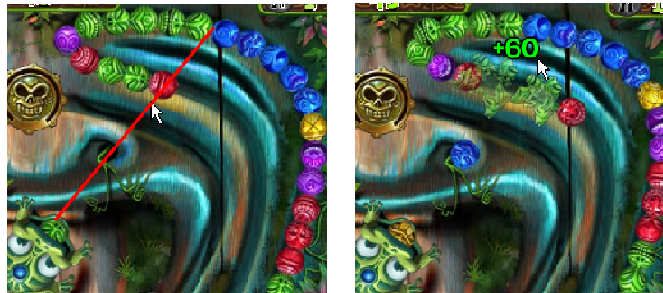
- High number of points especially with a good multiplier
- Can get you up the leaderboard quickly
- Single gaps are quick to set up

Disadvantages:

- Multiple gaps takes a long time (~30-45 seconds) to set up
- Need fast reflexes
- Low scores (typically less than 500k) or death if double gap setup fails or collapses due to misses or bad combination of balls

Double Tap

This technique has been explained in one Tiki Talk video, and involves firing two of them, with the first ball you fire creating a gap, and the second ball creating a gap shot. In this image below, we have a green ball waiting to be fired, and a blue ball as the reserve. Seeing a direct line where green-blue can be fired to create a gap, both of them are fired as fast as possible. The green one will destroy the first layer of balls while the blue ball will sail right through and get max points (10k) for a gap shot.



Repeated Gap Shots

On curves which wraps around itself, you can continuously make gapshots so as long as you have the right combination of balls. For two different curves, you need to keep the row of balls down on one side. On a standard three-ball gap, you get around 25% less from a gap shot compared to a double tap.



Tap, Right Click, Tap, Tap

This can be essentially useful when doing a double tap, but there's a fruit in the way. Your swapped ball will take care of the fruit while your third ball is equal to a double tap.

Multiple Gap Shot Setup Techniques

Due to the sheer number of points compared to other methods, mastering types of gapshots can make or break your score... and your position on the leaderboard. If your multiple gap skill techniques are in par with others, then speed and luck will determine the winner.

Small First Opening Double Gap

The Small First opening gives you a large amount of points for a gap shot, and you need only make a regular match to do so. Depending on the board, if the middle gap only wraps on itself, you only need one ball. Else you might need two balls to keep the double gap opportunity. However there is limited range to do a double gap, so you need to keep the curve low elsewhere. A standard three-ball double gap will give you around 50% more points than a successful double tap.



Small first gap, larger second gap with a safety ball near the end. Since there are two separate curves for a double gap, you need to place a ball near the end of the other curve.

Safety Ball: A ball (or balls) separated from the other balls on the curve, specifically for gaps that cover both curve paths. In the event that the first ball happens to roll back, the safety ball prevents your double gaps from becoming single gaps (and single gaps from being normal shots).

Large First Opening Double Gap

This strategy is smaller to the smaller first opening, but relies on placing only a few balls near the end of the curve. All your normal shots will be worth at least 100 points more, and all your gap shots will be worth twice as much, since they're considered double gaps. You have access to more balls to make gap shots, but you will need to do a lot of double tapping in order to equal the power of the small first opening double gap.



Setting up your multi gapshots

The key here is deployment time. You obviously need a lot of time to set this up (around 30-40 seconds), and you must grab multipliers and time balls while you're at it. If you don't, your system will not grant you as many points as you might expect. Compare to this between a car and running as an analogy between double gaps and regular gaps. Like a car, it takes a while to get it going, but once you get it moving, it can do so much more than gaps will.

Keeping the curve down while you build up

You can set up double gaps, but you have to find a way to prevent those balls from going too far to the point where you can't make them anymore. Don't focus on getting double gaps all the time – you will need to keep the curve down at all times. **Avoid making matches near the end of that curve – you may accidentally cause one of the balls forming your gap to slide back.**

Use Hot Frog wisely

Although you are tempted to destroy as many balls as possible with hot frog, you can do so to lessen the incoming curve, but **don't fire blindly**. Shoot in a position so that when it explodes, the resulting explosion will not cause your gap setup to slide back, nor will it destroy any balls forming your gap. The explosion will destroy balls in a 3-4 ball radius, so don't aim too close.

Thinking ahead



Thinking ahead is a crucial step in holding your double gap formation. In this example, you've got two purple balls in your queue. You might be tempted to shoot two purples in the 2nd diagram below (1), causing the green balls to roll back and giving you a multiplier (2). But wait! As soon as the multiplier gets activated, the red ball rolls back (3) and creates a match, the blue ball then rolls back (4), reducing your double gap value significantly. It matches, and in this diagram, a red ball is all the way at the beginning. Guess what? The red ball (5) rolls back, removing any trace of your double gap structure, and you'll most likely ragequit. Sure it will cause a curve clear (worth 22,600 points at this point in the game), but the gap's history. It would take another 20 or so seconds to rebuild the double gap.

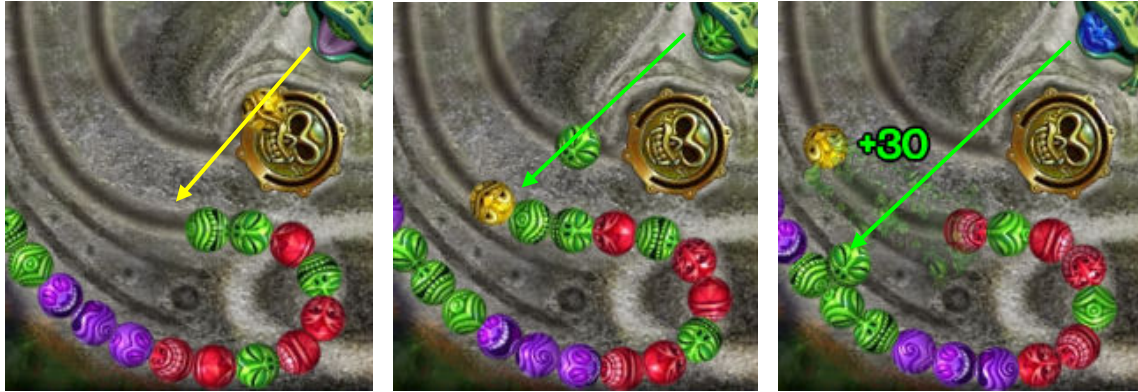
You might have only a split second to plan ahead especially at higher speeds, and you might not always make the best decisions especially when they're moving fast, but you will improve over time. Typically these huge cascading situations are very rare, you usually need to think about whether or not your match will cause a rollback or two.

Potential Large Gap Splitter

You have a group of seven red balls, you have one yellow and one red. How do you make an effective gap? Split the group of red balls in half using the yellow ball, and, depending on which side you can make gap shot with the ball in your reserve, clear one side using the red ball, and shoot through it. Your gap score will increase significantly compared to just using a red ball and double tapping, since any gap after the first isn't worth a lot.

Gap at the End

Say your current ball can clear the ball at the front of the curve. You can place a non-matching ball at the end, create a gap, and shoot through it.



Holes to prevent sliding

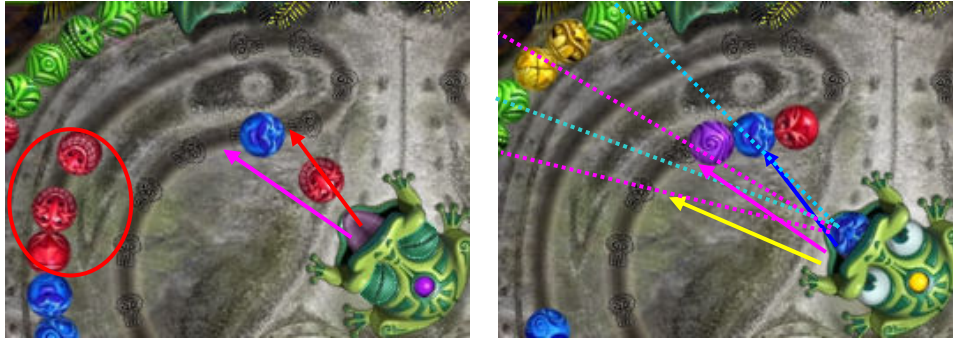
If you create lots of holes, and one slides back, there is a 20% chance of the next hole sliding back if you don't think ahead. Multiple holes decrease the chance of your gap or double gap setup from breaking apart.



Two holes created. If the first four ball group were to slide back, it would not disrupt the double-gap preparations.

Creating a gap opening with one isolated ball

After making holes, you might notice that balls might slide back, creating one isolated ball. There are two ways of doing this, one is slightly riskier than the other as there's a chance the ball you fired may miss or disrupt your two ball chain. Instead of firing purple first (right image) and then two blues, a blue could be added, then a purple, and then two more blues to create a gap.



Two balls around the blue ball, purple to the left, red to the right just after the red combo. Choose which color to match 3 depending on the area you want to cover with double gaps.

With two isolated balls (same color)

Place two different colored balls on both ends, and clear the original group of two isolated balls. You won't be flexible with the gap firing angle though.



Putting same color balls in both ends is a no-no. You know what happens next if you clear the yellow.

With two isolated balls (different colors)

You can actually expand in two different directions, one being the purple route, the other the red. Both give you different aiming options.



With three or more balls

Follow the instructions the one isolated ball after surrounding it with two balls. You're extremely flexible on how you want your final gap firing angle to turn out.

Moving your gap opening slightly

If you are for some reason unsatisfied with your opening, just add a few more balls, and make a match in a slightly different location.



Slide stopper

If you realize your next shot is causing your curve to slide back, you can quickly fire another one at one of the gap edges, or make another match to prevent a slide.



Quick thinking saved this double gap setup from being destroyed, causing only a minor slide.

Slide Slowdown

If you find the balls are coming in way too fast, you can execute a slide in order for them to stop briefly giving you more time to react before they start to pick up speed again. You will still get credit for a gap or double gap if it slides back and makes a match.



Extending the large gap

Useful only for a large first gap setup, this extends the size of your large gap by a bit, as well as slowing down the speed of the curve for a few seconds. Although this might be helpful in some cases, this is generally a last resort method to saving your double gap setup, and your time should be best used to finding matches that would make combos to slide back balls earlier in the curve.



Reducing the size of your gaps

On high multipliers the point difference is significant. The top has a gap value of 52900 ($4900 + 130 * 6 * 5$), the second has a gap value of 75780 ($6,120 + 130 * 3 * 6$)



Powerup Grab from the Gap Edge

So, what happens in the event that (this occurs frequently) when one of the two balls forming the gap contains a powerup? Do you ignore it or go for it? There are a few strategies for this one.

You would need to build up a group of two balls the same color as the powerup ball you're grabbing, and then a colored ball that's not the same color as the one all the way at the back, or the one on the other edge (in this case, not purple or blue. Shorten the gap and proceed as usual.



8. Misc Tips:

Muting the Volume

When you're recording, I tend to keep the external speakers off. Playing with no sound means you might miss out on the sound cues, but it allows you to concentrate better. It also reduces any nervousness in the last few seconds of the game, where your hand might shake and cause you to miss a lot of shots. Covering your score in the game with a piece of paper might help a bit as well.

What stuff to buy using idols

If you really have to use idols for stuff, my recommendation is to use money for just the 3x mojo potion. **Never use your idols on full life refills or instant mojo** – unless you bought idols with actual money. If you wish to level up quickly, a 24 hour life with a x2 XP potion will be very helpful. Even then, just save up anyways, you'll never know if they'll release new potions or powers that cost idols to use.

Improve your reaction time.

Reaction is key to a lot of concepts, including knowing the color of the ball in your reserve after you fire a shot. In order to effectively pull off most of the strategies in this guide to their full potential, your reaction time should be less than a second.

Wait a bit, try again.

If you experience stress or frustration after a game when you're unable to get past your high score (or another friend's score), repeated attempts on this board may cause your score to get progressively worse. Step back from the computer, relax, take a deep breath, and try it again.

Browser Restart and Tab Closure:

If you experience sluggish issues with Zuma Blitz (such as game stuttering), close as many programs down as possible. If that doesn't solve the problem, closing as many tabs as possible, or restarting the browser might help.

Appendix A: Level Up Table

Level	Rank	XP	Mojo	Effects
1	Outcast	200	0	
2	Whelp	600	0	Time Balls (+5 seconds when matched)
3	Tribeling	1000	0	Hot Frog
4	Kudo Carver	1200	500	Spirit Animals (up to 1 million score)
5	Temple Sweeper	1300	3000	Unlocks Temple
6	Fruit Scout	1500	4000	Fruit (acorn) – 3000 points
7	Time Keeper	1700	9000	Last Hurrah
8	Treasure Keeper	3000	4000	Treasure Chests (500, 1000, 1500, and 2000 mojo).
9	Spear Sharpener	3500	6000	2nd Power Slot (use up to two powerups at once)
10	Hut Builder	4000	1000	Speed Ball
11	Heart Healer	4700	5000	Extra Life Container (raised from 5 -> 6)
12	Treasure Herder	5100	1000	Additional Treasure Slot (Opens top left, 3000 mojo square)
13	Heart Mender	5400	3000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 7:45)
14	Orb Smacker	5700	5000	Critical Hit (1% chance)
15	Temple Cleaner	6000	1000	3rd Power Slot (use up to three powerups at once)
16	Path Hacker	6300	3000	Cannon
17	Fruit Slicer	6600	5000	New Fruit (mango) – 3300 points
18	Heart Finder	6900	2000	Life Container (raised from 6 -> 7)
19	Powder Packer	7300	4000	Inferno Frog
20	Mojo Monger	7800	6000	More Mojo (+50% more mojo, total 50% more mojo gained).
21	Kudo Keeper	8200	1000	Spirit Animal Eagle (1.1 million)
22	Heart Cleaner	8600	2000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 7:30)
23	Sphere Smasher	9000	5000	Fruit Master
24	Heart Collector	9400	3000	Life Container (raised from 7 -> 8)
25	Kudo Guard	9800	5000	Spirit Animal Alligator (1.2 million)
26	Heart Doctor	10200	7000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 7:15)
27	Sphere Basher	10600	2000	Chain Blast
28	Kudo Defender	11000	4000	Spirit Animal Shark (1.3 million)
29	Mojo Collector	11400	6000	More Mojo (+50% more mojo, total 100% more mojo gained)
30	Sphere Crusher	11800	4000	Chrono Balls
31	Heart Protector	12200	6000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 7:00)
32	Treasure Sage	12600	8000	Additional Treasure Slot (opens top right, 8000 mojo square)
33	Heart Champion	13000	3000	Life Container (raised from 8 -> 9)
34	Sphere Smusher	13400	5000	Multiplier
35	Heart Hero	13800	7000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 6:45)
36	Orb Eliminator	14200	5000	Critical Hit % Increased (2%)
37	Fruit Chef	14600	7000	New Fruit (pineapple), base score raised from 3300 -> 3600
38	Sphere Blaster	15000	9000	Tiki Bombs
39	Heart Legend	15400	4000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 6:30)
40	Mojo Maven	15800	6000	More Mojo (+50% more mojo, total 150% more mojo gained)
41	Ball Cracker	16200	8000	Mega Hurrah (upgrades Last Hurrah)
42	Kudo Protector	16600	6000	Spirit Animal Elephant (1.4 million)
43	Heart Master	17000	8000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 6:15)
44	Ball Smacker	17400	10000	Super Speed
45	Fruit Warrior	17800	5000	New Fruit (coconut) – 3900 points
46	Ball Zapper	18200	7000	Cannon King
47	Heart Chief	18600	9000	Faster Life Regen (new regen timer: 6:00)
48	Orb Decimator	19000	7000	Critical Hit % increase (3%)
49	Mojo Master	19400	9000	More Mojo (50% more mojo, total 200% more mojo gained)
50	Ball Exploder	30000	11000	Sun Frog (upgrades Inferno Frog)

Level	Rank	XP	Mojo	Effects
51	Kudo Mystic	20400	6000	Spirit Animal Jaguar (1.5 million)
52	Treasure Guard	20800	8000	Additional Treasure Slot (opens bottom right, 4 idol square)
53	Ball Burster	21200	10000	Juicy Fruit, (upgrades Fruit Master)
54	Fruit Champion	21600	8000	New Fruit (cacao) – 4200 points
55	Orb Annihilator	22000	10000	Critical Hit % increase (4%)
56	Ball Crasher	22400	12000	Super Chain Blast (upgrades Chain Blast)
57	Orb Expunger	22800	7000	Critical Hit % increase (5%)
58	Kudo King	23200	9000	Spirit Animal Bear (1.6 million)
59	Ball Smasher	23600	11000	Voodoo Bombs (upgrades Tiki Bombs)
60	Fruit Smoothie	24000	9000	New Fruit (kiwi) – 4500 points
61	Orb Eradicator	24400	11000	Critical Hit % increase (6%)
62	Ball Basher	24800	13000	Epic Fruit (Upgrades Juicy Fruit)
63	Orb Demolisher	25200	8000	Critical Hit % increase (7%)
64	Kudo Champion	25600	10000	Spirit Animal Lion (1.7 million)
65	Fruit Mystic	26000	12000	New Fruit (peach) – 4800 points
66	Ball Hunter	26400	10000	Tempus Fugit (upgrades Chrono Balls)
67	Orb Eater	26800	12000	Critical Hit % increase (8%)
68	Treasure Champ	27200	14000	Additional Treasure Slot (opens bottom left, 8 idol square)
69	Ball Abolisher	27600	9000	Super Cannon (upgrades Cannon King)
70	Orb Clobberer	28000	11000	Critical Hit % Increase (9%)
71	Kudo Legend	28400	13000	Spirit Animal Dinosaur (1.9 million)
72	Fruit Veteran	28800	11000	New Fruit (avacado) – 5100 points
73	Ball Breaker	29200	13000	Warp Ball
74	Orb Slammer	29600	15000	Critical Hit % increase (10%)
75	Ball Blaster	30000	10000	Mega Chain (upgrades Super Chain Blast)
76	Kudo Boss	30400	12000	Spirit Animal Unicorn (1.9 million)
77	Ball King	30800	14000	Time Lord (upgrades Tempus Fugit)
78	Kudo Veteran	31200	12000	Spirit Animal Quetzalcoatl (2+ million)
79	Ball Paragon	31600	14000	Multi Multiplier (upgrades Multiplier)
80	Golden Frog	---	16000	Golden Frog. Current level cap.
80M	Zuma Blitz Master	---	0	Level Reset, keep mojo, idols, golden frog, any unlocked powerups, glowing frame

Expanded Level Cap Version

81	Astute Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
82	Boisterous Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
83	Capable Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
84	Dependable Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
85	Exemplary Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
86	Fabulous Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
87	Great Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
88	Hellacious Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
89	Insatiable Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
90	Zuma Frog	---	0	Effects Unknown.
91	Zuma Defender	---	0	Effects Unknown.
92	Zuma Warrior	---	0	Effects Unknown.
93	Zuma Champion	---	0	Effects Unknown.
94	Zuma Boss	---	0	Effects Unknown.
95	Zuma Mystic	---	0	Effects Unknown.
96	Zuma Veteran	---	0	Effects Unknown.
97	Zuma Baller	---	0	Effects Unknown.
98	Zuma Blaster	---	0	Effects Unknown.
99	Zuma King	---	0	Effects Unknown.
100	Zuma Paragon	---	0	Effects Unknown.

Appendix B: Scoring Mechanics

NOTE: All point calculations made below assume a multiplier of 1x.

Basic Matching:

Matched balls are worth 10-130 points each per ball destroyed, depending on how far the hot frog meter is filled at the time the ball was launched. If the meter is more than half full, it's worth a full 130 points. This is known as the **speed bonus**.

Matching a time ball will add an additional 100 points.

Combo Bonus:

This occurs when a match is made and balls slide together, which causes another match, and so forth. The first combo is worth 1000 points, the second combo, 2000, the third 3000, and so forth. The number of points that would normally be gained from this match (as mentioned above) is also added to this total. This doesn't increment the chain bonus.

Chain Bonus:

Chain bonus is accumulated after making more than six consecutive matches. The bonus for the 6th would be 200, the 7th would be 210, the 8th would be 220, and so on.

Gap Bonus:

The Gap bonus ranges from 100 to 10000 points, depending on how wide the gap is. Score gained is proportional to the gap size in a linear fashion as shown in the following table. (Note this assumes your gap between the balls is exactly straight – since the gap bonus is determined by the length of the curve between the balls, so your scores may vary slightly.)

Gap Size (in balls)	Points
10+	100
9	120
8	1320
7	2520
6	3720
5	4920
4	6120
3	7320
2	8520
1.5	9120 (you need to fire the ball at just the right angle!)

If your first match created a gap and your next shot goes through that gap and makes a match while the other ball is in the air, it's almost guaranteed to be 10,000 points, regardless of gap size.

In the event of a double gap (or higher) the gap size / score is determined by the smallest gap the ball went through, and is multiplied by the number of gaps it passed through.

Consolation Bonus:

This occurs if a time bonus ball is matched (due to firing it or combo) after time is called. All balls within a four-ball radius of the time ball are destroyed, and you gain 500 per ball destroyed + 1000 per time ball collected in that game. (The number of time balls collected is in the results screen)

Curve Clear Bonus:

This occurs when a curve is completely cleared. The bonus is 2000 + 100 per second that elapsed from the start of the game when you made the curve clear. (Note: The elapsed time in-game is not visible, so in short, the longer you've been playing in the game, the faster the balls will move, and the more points you get for a clear.) There is a minimum distance balls must reach before another clear bonus can be made on the same curve.

Fruit Bonus:

The fruit bonus score value is on the right side. To be more specific, each fruit has a base score value. the 1st fruit you hit is worth 100% of its base value, the 2nd, 150%, the third, 200%, the fourth 250%, and every fruit hit after that is worth 300% of its base value.

Bombs:

Any balls destroyed in the blast are worth 10-130 points each depending on how far the hot frog meter was filled up, with 130 being a bit over the halfway mark.

Hot Frog:

The explosion destroys nearby balls giving a base score of 2000 points plus 100 points per ball destroyed in the blast.

Last Hurrah:

This explodes all powerups on the board, giving a base score of 1000 points for each explosion plus 100 points per ball destroyed in the last hurrah blasts. These points are doubled when a Mega Hurrah powerup is active.

Cannon Shot:

Any balls destroyed by the cannon are worth 10 points per ball destroyed. Unlike other explosions / matches where the game tells you how many points you earned on that shot, the game doesn't do this when you fire a cannon shot.

Critical Hit:

Critical hit doubles the amount of points that you would make on a single shot. The chance of getting a critical, however, depends on your level (10% on Level 80)

Multipliers:

If a match is made containing a multiplier, the multiplier is added, then the score is added factoring in the new multiplier.

Appendix C: Balls Cleared to Mojo Table

As of January 1, 2011

Balls Mojo Gain	XP	(Mojo Gained)				
		1-19 100%	20-28 150%	29-39 200%	40-48 250%	49+ 300%
1-34	100	50	75	100	125	150
35-44	150	70	105	140	175	210
45-49	175	90	135	180	225	270
50-74	200	100	150	200	250	300
75-99	225	115	172	230	287	345
100-124	250	125	187	250	312	375
125-149	265	135	202	270	337	405
150-199	275	150	225	300	375	450
200-249	300	175	262	350	437	525
250-299	325	200	300	400	500	600
300-349	340	225	337	450	562	675
350-399	350	250	375	500	625	750
400-449	365	275	412	550	687	825
450-499	375	300	450	600	750	900
500-599	385	325	487	650	812	975
600+	400	375	562	750	937	1125

Note: Amount of mojo gained is rounded down. So $175 * 1.5 = 262.5 \rightarrow 262$ mojo. Note that round down occurs after triple mojo calculations, so with a 3x mojo potion, $175 * 1.5 * 3 = 767.5 \rightarrow 767$ mojo.

Appendix C2: Share Mojo Amounts

(As of June 9, 2011)

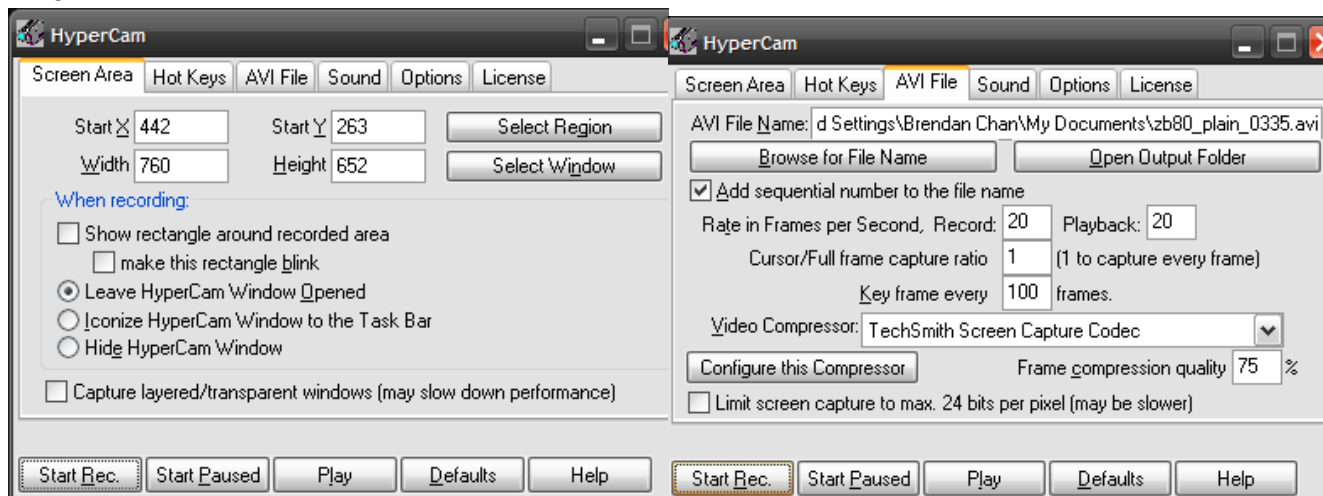
Action	Share Amount (mojo)
Fortune Cookie	25-15000 (random) + 0-169 (freshness)
Level Up	500-1500 mojo (after level 6)
Daily Spin Payout	400
New High Score	500
Item Unlock	500
First Spirit Animal	2000
New Circle (spirit animal)	2500
Tournament 1 st - 3 rd place	2500
Daily Spin Large Payout (> 10000)	4000
Entering Mastery	20000

Appendix D: Screen Recording

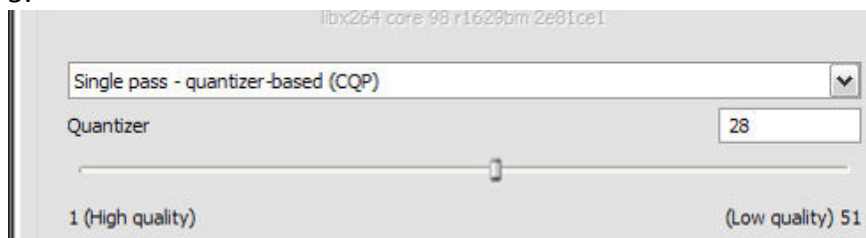
1. Install x264vfw and Hypercam 2 before doing any of the below steps.
2. Run Hypercam
3. on AVI File tab, set Framerate to 20 (Record), Key frame every 100 frames
4. Video compressor: Select x264vfw - H.264/MPEG-4 AVC codec
5. Hit 'configure this compressor', on the left drop down box select Single pass-Quantizer-based, and set the slider to 24 or 28. Press OK
6. on Sound tab, check 'record sound'
7. on Screen Area tab, press select region and (while the game is open) draw an area around the game window (click on the top left of the game screen and then the bottom right of where you want to record)
8. Round up the width and height to a multiple of 4
9. uncheck 'show rectangle around recorded area'
10. check 'Hide hypercam window' (if it's blocking your game screen)
11. Before starting the game, hit F2 to begin recording and F2 after the game is over to stop recording.

In my opinion, x264 is the best compressor I've seen: Small file sizes for quick uploads, while having very good quality. However, it tends to lag the game a bit on slower systems.

1-10:



5.



Appendix E: Daily Spin

Once a day (at around 12am PST) you get a chance to spin the wheel.



The combinations are shown as above. Daily spin costs after the free one is currently unknown, but is assumed to be 3 fb credits.

The amount you win from the daily spin is multiplied depending on the level you're currently you're on (x4 on Lvl 46).

Appendix F: Promotional Items

Note: Emails from Zuma Blitz containing items will come into your inbox ONLY if you allow Zuma Blitz to send you emails (under account settings » notifications – on the bottom of that screen). Other than that, check to see if it's not in your spam folder.

April 13: Totally 80's Club Idols

- Used to give players bonuses upon reaching 80 or mastery
- 30 Idols given

May 5: Totally 80's Club Mojo

- 10,000 mojo

May 6: Mother's Day Mojo Potion

- Either 10-game 3x mojo or 24h 3x mojo potion

June 2: Totally 80's Club Idol20

- 20 idols

June 6: Mastery 24h Life

- 24 hour life starting at the time you clicked on the link in the email

June 11-13: Player Appreciation Days

- Cost to buy idols reduced

June 18-19: Warehouse Clearance Sale

- 1 Facebook Credit -> 5 idols
- 36 Facebook Credits (\$3.60) -> 238 idols
- 249 Facebook Credits (\$25) -> 2017 idols (a gift card covers this)
- 799 Facebook Credits (\$80) -> 7511 idols

June 20: Warehouse Clearance Sale, Part 2

- 1 Facebook Credit -> 6 idols
- 21 Facebook Credits (\$2.10) -> 139 idols
- 66 Facebook Credits (\$6.60) -> 469 idols
- 451 Facebook Credits (\$45) -> 4104 idols

June 20: Fun in the Sun Solstice Party

- 10,000 bonus mojo
- Full life refills reduced from 25 idols to 0 idols. (Note: This is **not** the same as a 24h life)
- 19 Facebook Credits -> 100 idols
- 29 Facebook Credits (\$3) -> 230 idols
- 59 Facebook Credits (\$6) -> 530 idols
- 248 Facebook Credits (\$25) -> 3750 idols

June 27: Hoppy Hour

- Bomb power costs 0 mojo
- Cost of idols reduced to June 20 prices.
- * It borrows the 'happy hour' term from Bejeweled Blitz, but slightly misleading since it actually lasts for an entire day on Zuma instead of four hours on Bejeweled. And 'hoppy' is with an O, not an A.

The normal cost for idols...

- 7 Facebook Credits -> 35 idols
- 29 Facebook Credits (\$3) -> 170 idols
- 125 Facebook Credits (\$12.50) -> 800 idols
- 199 Facebook Credits (\$20) -> 1500 idols

During the summer...

- 24 Facebook Credits (\$2.50) -> 100 idols
- 49 Facebook Credits (\$5) -> 230 idols
- 98 Facebook Credits (\$10) -> 530 idols
- 496 Facebook Credits (\$50) -> 3750 idols

Version History

v1.0 (Jun 5 2011)

- Preview release

v1.1 (Jun 7 2011)

- Initial Release

v1.2 (Jun 20 2011)

- Title screen volcano animation, potion layout change
- Fixed Mojo Table which didn't show correct values.
- Added quick recording guide
- Added share mojo amounts for posting various stuff.
- Food (area just above the time to next tournament)
- Added Promotional Items
- Added Version History

v1.3 (Jul 1 2011)

- Fixed mojo harvesting tip factoring in free powers from happy hour
- Visual example of the consequences of chain blast
- Real life example of double gap close to end factoring skull
- Removed a chance of death for single gap shots – they only really apply to multiple gaps.
- Repeat gap shots for three ball gaps (the gap that gets created when you match three balls) shows you how many points you get compared to a gap from double tapping.
- Improved the visual quality of powerups on this guide
- Daily Spin
- Added note about golden frog being preserved after mastery (previously it wasn't the case)

Credits

Level Up Table:

Astein, AŽ, BlueViper02, brohan, Cédric, ClubMojo, Catherine Krueger, Curtis Tobin Sr., Danielle Buford, Duncan Watson, DJ B-Rad, JDPower, joehester, Matias, MC, RobertD, thexc, and several other anonymous users.

General Fixes:

thexc (for pointing out image quality)

Scoring Mechanics:

Zuma Blitz official Tiki Talk videos for Critical Hit percent values.