# 8-BALL THE CLAIRVOYANT CAT

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## 1. ABOUT THIS PROGRAM

This is a little spoof of newspaper horoscopes and of The Magic 8-Ball, the classic toy that gave you a fortune when you looked at its transparent base. A smiling cat named 8-Ball is wise, revered, highly respected... and a little cheeky. When you ask him for your fortune, he will give you one of 16 possible responses—all of them sarcastic and tongue-in-cheek. That, fellow retrocomputing fans, is why 8-Ball retains a lawyer.

## 2. FORMATS

8-Ball the Clairvoyant Cat is saved in two formats for use in a real MC-10 or an emulator.

- **8BALL.C10** is a specialized file for use with the Virtual MC-10 emulator.
- **8BALL.WAV** is a WAV audio file that can be used in a real MC-10 or an emulator. Copy the file onto an audio cassette for loading into a real MC-10 by typing **CLOAD "8BALL"**, or save it into the appropriate folder for loading into an emulator.

There is presently no text file for the program because the code contains special characters used to print the on-screen graphics that so far does not translate into a .TXT format. These characters can be viewed by typing **LIST** then the ENTER key on the MC-10 or an emulator.

## 3. SCREENSHOTS

These screenshots of the program in operation were taken from the Virtual MC-10 emulator's screenshot function.

***Title page of "8-Ball the Clairvoyant Cat"***

***Like it says, press any key for your tongue-in-cheek fortune.***

***Said tongue-in-cheek fortune, courtesy of our friend 8-Ball.***
***If you like this kind of stuff or think this time it was a mistake, you can try again.***

**4. DEVELOPMENT**

This program was written in Micro Color BASIC using James the Animal Tamer's Virtual MC-10 emulator packet (www.geocities.com/emucompboy). It was first done as a text-only program, then the graphics were added after the kernel (I *think* that's what the core program code is called) worked successfully in test runs.

If you think 8-Ball looks more like a dog than a cat, you can hack the code and rename it “8-Ball the Clairvoyant Boston Terrier”. :)

This was an idea that I had for at least two years and was inspired by Bitsy, a black-and-white cat that my Aunt Patty used to own. I considered first creating it on the Atari 2600 but the limitations of that console ruled it out—for now, at least. When I downloaded Virtual MC-10 and learned it could be programmed in traditional BASIC, I found the perfect console to make 8-Ball a reality.

While the program is basically done, I hope to tweak it so the fortunes can be displayed without scrolling down each time. I also want to use the ON... GOTO function to have the fortune commands executed with less code and memory.