

NOX ARCHAIST



David Good
2013



6502 Workshop

NOX ARCHAIST



AN 8-BIT COMPUTER
ROLE-PLAYING GAME



6502 Workshop

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The display typeface is ITC Benguiat Pro, a decorative serif designed by Ed Benguiat in 1977. The body typeface is 10.5/13pt Warnock Pro, designed by Robert Slimbach in 1997 and named after John Warnock, the co-founder of Adobe. Designed and typeset using Adobe InDesign. Printed by Lulu Press.

Cover: *The Demon Lord Vazarath*, by Denis Loubet.

Special thanks to Richard Garriott for permission to use Lord British as a guest character within Nox Archaist; thanks to Burger Becky for advice on Mockingboard driver design; and thanks to Dr. Cat for advice on pulse-width-modulation audio techniques. Thanks to April and Melody Ayres-Griffiths for creating the Nox App emulator. Mark Lemmert would like to thank his brothers John and Glen for introducing him to the Ultima role-playing game series and programming on the Apple II in the 1980s, which is where the inspiration for Nox Archaist was born.

Rev. 1.1

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WHAT WAS ONCE OLD
IS NEW AGAIN...



PREFACE

AGES AGO IN THE REALM OF VALI, a group of philosopher adventurers discovered a powerful energy emanating from deep underground. They learned to harness this energy with their minds and project it to kinetic and psychological effect. We know this as *magic*. These adventurers called themselves the *Order of Nox Archaist*, and members were granted the honorific title of *Nox*.

Initially, this energy was very weak on the *Overworld* and could only be harnessed in the *Underworld*, known as the *Depths of Vacous*. The Overworld races of humans, elves, and dwarves had long suffered from sporadic raids by the orcs, kobolds, and gnomes of the Underworld. Seeing the magical energy as a way to tip the balance of power, the Overworld races invaded. The orcs, kobolds, and gnomes put aside their old feuds to resist the intruders. Eventually, the Overworld races, united under King Silus, conquered the Underworld army. When the King returned to the surface in triumph, he bore with him several magic crystals. By placing these crystals around the *Realm of Vali*, the magical energy of the Underworld was amplified throughout the Overworld.

Using the energy of the crystals, the Order of Nox Archaist grew strong in power and wealth. Meanwhile, with their armies destroyed and their magic power diminished, the orcs, kobolds, and gnomes retreated into the dark corners of the Underworld.

As the years passed, the war with the Underworld was forgotten. Only those in the Order and the King's descendants remembered the ancient battles.

Today, *Queen Isa* rules a vast realm filled with prosperous towns, strong castles, and valiant people. With the help of her lords,

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including Lord Estintar, Lord Hraakvar, Lord Code Masseur, and Lord Carrington, Queen Isa has kept her people safe and her borders secure.

Until now.

The trouble began with a few unexplained disappearances. A cow, taken in the night from a small village. Street urchins gone missing. People blamed bandits or suspected their neighbors. At the same time, groups of *Reformists* spread dissent throughout the provinces. They claimed that taxes were too high, the Order of Nox Archaist was ineffectual, and the monarchy itself was a useless anachronism.

Queen Isa, alarmed that the provincial rulers, the *Margraves*, were doing nothing to restore order, removed most of them from office and put the provinces under the direct control of the Lords of the North and South. The *Loyalists* applauded this move and confidently predicted that prosperous times were just ahead.

The troubles only grew worse. Crops began to fail, an entire village was burned to the ground, roving packs of wolves harassed travelers, and rumors spread of terrifying monsters and raging storms.

When the *Cultists* appeared and claimed they could provide aid, people were only too eager to listen. As the attacks and misfortunes intensified, many people gave their few possessions and wealth to the Cult and joined out of fear and desperation.

The Order of Nox Archaist, apparently powerless to stop the problems, was viewed with a mixture of suspicion and outright hostility. Queen Isa was one of the few who remained faithful. She saw the Cult for what it truly was: an abomination of the Order, set on plunging the Realm into darkness.

To combat the growing threat, the Queen has sent out a call to worthy adventurers. To those who prove their worth, she has issued a Writ of Authority, giving them leave to travel the Realm, bear arms, and defend her subjects.

— P R E F A C E —

You are one of these adventurers: a native of the *Isles of Wynmar*, trained under the Order of Nox Archaist and sworn to defend the Realm of Queen Isa. You seek fame, riches, and most importantly you seek to honor the Queen by defeating the mysterious Cult.



After hearing rumors of a *Dark Void* tied to the Cult, you book passage on a ship bound for a nearby island. The Captain seems reluctant to take you, but after showing him your purse full of gold, he readily agrees.

A few days into the voyage, you've befriended one of the sailors, a grizzled old veteran with skin like mahogany. You ask him how he likes life as a merchant.

"A merchant? Ha!" The grizzled sailor spits and gives you a quizzical eye. "We're pirates, matey."

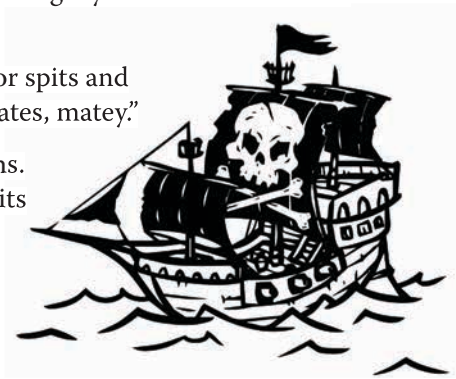
Seeing the look on your face, he grins. "Now don't you worry. Keep your wits about you and that fancy sword of yours sharp, and you'll do just fine."

The pirate looks at you more closely.

"You ain't one of them Loyalists are you?" He spits again. "Can't abide by 'em. Me, I'm a Reformist. Throw 'em all out and start over, that's what I say."

You shift nervously, hoping he doesn't see the truth on your face. When you ask him about the ship's destination, he gives a great wheezing laugh.

"No, we ain't bound for any of the Isles, though I sure wouldn't mind seeing Irene again."



He points a crooked finger towards the aft deck. “You see that figure, the one with the hood?”

You nod, realizing the truth before he even says it.

“That’s a Cultist,” he says, and spits.

“Can’t stand ’em myself. Rumor has it he paid the Cap’n a large sum of money and jewels for this trip. Better be worth it for the risks we’re taking. We ain’t sailing anywhere in the Isles of Wynmar. We’re headed straight for the Dark Void.”

Glancing again at the cowled figure, you see him conversing with the Captain, both of them looking in your direction. You see the Captain nod his head.

Later that night, you awake suddenly, your hammock swinging softly. You hear a key turn in the lock. As your cabin door swings open, the dim lantern light outlines the bulky figure of the Captain and the dark robes of the Cultist. Moving more quickly than you believed possible, the Cultist rushes towards you.

You shout, trying to free yourself from the hammock. The Cultist lightly touches your bare arm, and a strange lethargy settles over you. You see the Captain saunter over, a large cudgel in his hand. As you feebly attempt to raise your arms, the Captain flips the cudgel end-over-end and then brings it crashing down on your head.



As consciousness slowly returns, you find yourself sitting in the damp brig, rocking back and forth with the swaying of the ship. Ruefully, you consider your choices over the past few days. Your sword is gone, along with your purse of gold. However, to your relief, the pirates didn’t discover the knife and small pouch of coins within your boots. The pirates also missed your Writ from the Queen, hidden within a secret fold of your jacket.

— P R E F A C E —

As you stagger to your feet, the ship gives a lurch. Distant shouts reach your ears as the ship heaves in the other direction. Someone cries out “the Dark Void!” The air is filled with the sound of cracking timbers and the rush of seawater.

You pound on the bars of your cell, water pouring into the room. A figure staggers towards you. It’s the grizzled sailor. He tosses you a ring of keys. “Save yourself! The ship’s done for. Never seen such a storm!” A surge of seawater sweeps him away as you fumble to find the right key and unlock the door.

You fight your way through floating wreckage to reach the main deck. Shaking water out of your eyes, you see the storm raging overhead. The gray-green sky is filled with wisps of black smoke. Lightning pierces the darkness, but the sound is muffled. You see sailors rush past you, their mouths open in silent screams. Whispering voices float on the wind, speaking in a fell tongue. A voice speaks a single name inside your head,

“Vazarath.”

A bolt of lightning silently strikes the main mast, cracking it in half. Looking up, you see the yardarm tumbling towards you. You try to shout but no sound comes out. The world goes black.



The water slaps against your face. You find yourself clinging to a broken timber, sand and rocks scraping against your battered limbs. Thinking back, you have a dim recollection of the shock of icy water, finding the floating timber, and the shouts of men surrounding you. As the night wore on, the cries for help faded away.

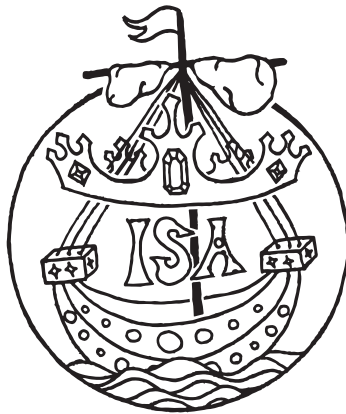
You crawl ashore, spluttering out sea water, clutching your knife. Every muscle aches from struggling against the storm. Now,

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shipwrecked and bereft of sword and armor, how can you hope to investigate the Dark Void and destroy the Cult?

Raising your head, you see a figure approach, carrying a glowing torch. As the figure steps closer, you see that the light comes not from a torch, but from the tip of an oak staff. A black robe envelopes the figure, with a low hood that completely obscures its face. A Cultist? With a cry you struggle to free your knife from the clinging seaweed. As you look up, you see that the figure is simply standing there, holding out a hand. You slowly take the hand and pull yourself to your feet.

As the figure lowers its hood and smiles warmly, you realize that even though you swore to defend the Realm from shadow and darkness, perhaps you don't have to do it alone.





INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO NOX ARCHAIST, an 8-bit computer role-playing game! While playing the game, you take on the persona of an adventurer in the land of Vali, ruled by Queen Isa. As the player, you control one or more characters who form a party of adventurers. Your characters will travel the Realm, visiting towns and castles, exploring dungeons, talking to non-player characters (NPCs), and fighting monsters.

As you journey, your characters will grow in wealth, experience, and skill. The wealth and experience are not an end in themselves. Instead, they provide a way to measure your progress and give you the opportunity to face ever greater foes and challenges as you seek to save the world from an unknown and terrible danger.

The land of Vali is a challenging and unforgiving place. Nox Archaist does not use level scaling, where encounters are balanced for your party's strength. If you are not ready to face a challenge, you will be soundly defeated. When this happens, think carefully about causes. Perhaps you are missing someone in your party with certain skills, or maybe you need to rethink your tactics, or perhaps you simply need to upgrade your weapons, armor, and spells. In many cases, the best course of action may be to explore another region, gain more experience, and then come back later when your party is ready.

There is no right or wrong way to play. Although there is an overarching story, there are many side quests and adventures that are enjoyable in themselves. Or, you can simply wander from town to town, talking to NPCs, fighting monsters, and immersing yourself in the Realm of Vali.

GAME BOX CONTENTS

The boxed set of Nox Archaist comes with several items needed to play the game. The downloadable version includes these items as disk images and PDF files.


Some boxed sets come with 5¼-inch double-sided floppy disks. See **STARTING THE GAME** (p. 16) for instructions on running from floppy disks. The USB thumb drive contains Nox Archaist as an executable application along with an associated Apple II HDV disk image for running the game on other platforms such as Windows or macOS. Refer to **INSTALLATION** (p. 15) for details on how to install the game image onto an Apple II hard drive.

This manual contains all of the information that you need to play Nox Archaist, including game installation, character creation, adventuring tips, a guide to combat, and lists of equipment, spells, and monsters.

The map shows the Isles of Wynmar where most of the story takes place (see p. 114). Use this map when planning your journey, but keep in mind that not all towns or dungeons are shown on the map. It's up to you to discover these as you explore.

You also have a Writ from Queen Isa, giving you leave to bear arms and fight against the Queen's enemies. Guard this Writ carefully, as you'll need to present it when visiting towns and castles.

A postcard from a friend provides some background and may give clues to your quest. Depending upon the bundle you purchased, you may have other items such as a coin of the Realm or a magic crystal. Use these wisely.

 **Tip:** The game comes with a fantasy soundtrack composed for Nox Archaist. We recommend that you listen to the soundtrack while reading this manual and while playing the game as an enhancement to the in-game music.

INSTALLATION

The installation instructions depend upon whether you are playing the game from floppy disks, using a hard drive on an Apple II computer, or playing in an emulator using a virtual hard drive.

If you want to play using floppy disks, there are no additional installation instructions. See **STARTING THE GAME** (p. 16) for the correct floppy disks to insert, and then boot your computer.

If you want to load the disk image onto a hard drive (either physical or emulated) on an Apple II computer, you should refer to the documentation for your hardware device. In most cases, this will require transferring the Nox Archaist HDV disk image onto a USB memory stick, compact flash, or SD card, and then selecting that disk image when booting the computer.

If you're going to play using an emulator, you should be able to run the game directly from the Nox Archaist application (the Nox App). You should have received the program either on a USB thumb drive (for the boxed set) or as a downloadable file. For instructions on copying the files, see the README file on either the thumb drive or in the downloaded archive.

If you want to use an emulator other than the Nox App, or you've downloaded the disk image separately, you should refer to your emulator's instructions on how to load and run disk images.



Tip: For questions about installation, running the game, or gameplay, consult the Support section of NOXARCHAIST.COM, or check the websites listed in the **Tutorial and Community** main menu item.

STARTING THE GAME

To run from floppy disks, insert the **BOOT** disk (Disk 1 Side B) into drive 1 and the **OVERWORLD** disk into drive 2, and then turn on your computer. After the game starts you'll be prompted to insert the **MAIN** disk. To do this, flip over the disk in drive 1 to side A. Leave the **OVERWORLD** disk in drive 2.

During the game, you'll be prompted to change disks when you move from one region to another. To do this, insert the correct side of the requested disk into drive 2. Leave the **MAIN** disk in drive 1. Both the **MAIN** disk and **OVERWORLD** disk need to be writable: do not use a write-protect tab on these. The **MAIN** disk is used to cache information during game play, while the **OVERWORLD** disk is used to store saved games.

To run from a hard drive, start your Apple II computer or emulator with the Nox Archaist HDV disk image. Since the disk image contains the entire game, you won't need to do any disk swapping. Make sure your operating system and firewall settings permit the disk image to be writable.

After the game displays the splash screen, press any key to continue to the main menu.

MAIN MENU

The main game menu contains the following options:

Continue Game: Resume a previously saved game. The game will ask whether you want to continue from save slot 1 or 2. See **SAVING YOUR GAME** (p. 54). If you don't have a saved game this will automatically take you to **Start a New Game**.

Start a New Game: The game will first ask you to accept the End User Licensing Agreement. For details on starting a new game see the **QUICK START** (p. 19) and **CHARACTER CREATION** (p. 24).



Warning: Starting a new game will erase both save slots. See **MAKING A BACKUP** (p. 18) if you want to create multiple saved games.

Import Saved Game: Import the saved game from a previous version of Nox Archaist. For detailed instructions see the README file that came with your game or the Support section of NOXARCHAIST.COM. After the import is complete you will need to reboot.

Tutorial and Community: Links to helpful videos and websites.

About Nox Archaist: Shows the game version and other information.

Acknowledgments: Displays the credits and the Scrolls of Nobility.

Enter Code: This menu item is used to activate special features.

MOCKINGBOARD SETUP

Nox Archaist has in-game sound effects that play through the standard computer speaker. These include sounds for movement, spells, and combat. If you have a Mockingboard-compatible sound card, Nox Archaist will play music during various game transitions. The sound card setup depends upon your platform:

Apple IIe: The sound card is automatically detected and enabled.

Apple IIgs: Either slot 4 or slot 1 is recommended, but any slot should work. Use the Control Panel to set the slot to “Your Card.”

Nox App: The app automatically enables Mockingboard sound.

Other systems or emulators: Refer to their documentation on how to enable Mockingboard sound.

During game play you can use the <V> key to turn off sound effects, music, or both.

MAKING A BACKUP

Nox Archaist allows you to save your game in two save slots: see **SAVING YOUR GAME** (p. 54). You may find it useful or necessary to make a backup copy of your saved game. If you are playing from floppy disks you can copy the **OVERWORLD** disk using any standard copy program. You do not need to copy any other disks. If you are using the HDV disk image on either physical hardware or an emulator, you should copy the entire HDV file.

Warning: If you are using the Nox App, you should make sure that your new disk image retains the original filename and that there is only one disk image in the application folder.





QUICK START

YOU MAY FIND IT USEFUL to explore the Nox Archaist tutorial videos and community websites, especially if this is your first time playing a computer role-playing game. You can find a list of these on the main game menu and at NOXARCHAIST.COM.

If you've played games like this before and you want to dive right in, we strongly recommend that you read this quick-start chapter first. It describes some of the unique features of Nox Archaist, as well as some general tips.

To help you get started in the Realm of Vali, we tracked down Nox Ffred in the pub in Everton. After buying him a pint of Ghrodwir Stout, we asked him for his favorite tips.

First, start out slowly. Don't go rushing off into the wilds like a drunken dwarf without an axe. Remember, once monsters have picked up your trail they won't stop chasing you. Find friends: I think there's someone here in Everton looking for adventure. Start with a fighter, a thief, and a mage, but get to six party members as soon as you can.

Stay close to town and pick off rabid dogs and rabble rousers. The guards are your friends; if you get chased back to town by enemies, the guards will clear them out.

You're a good hunter, so you don't need to worry about starving. However, there are only three things that will rejuvenate your health and magic: a healer (expensive), resting at an inn (hard to find in the woods), or good, old-fashioned food rations. Sure, they taste like dried basilisk strips, but hey, you're tough, right? I try to rest after every battle to restore

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some health and magic. If you don't need the health or magic it won't waste any extra rations.

When you start, stick close to Everton so you'll be near the Inn. Once you've gained experience and improved your skills by using them in combat, cross the river to Suurtheld Castle and clear out some hooligans. These battles will not be easy! Buy your companions shortswords and shortbows as soon as you have the gold.

Speaking of gold, don't hoard your treasure. You'll find lots of armor, weapons, gems, books and other items. Some of these you can use, and some have a special purpose. Others are just loot. If something doesn't have an obvious use, try selling it. If the merchant refuses your offer, don't be offended; that item must be important and you should hang onto it.

Don't forget to consult your quest log. It tracks the basics of who you've talked to and where you're headed. It doesn't record every clue and can't replace a good map. You'll want to bring a sheaf of parchment and your favorite quill pen to keep a journal.

Next, we asked Nox Ffred about gaining experience and skills, and what to do if you think you're moving too slowly.

This isn't a race; you're not on a deadline. The only thing fast will get you is dead. If you want to move up in the world quickly, wait until nighttime. Lots of creatures come out. Just be sure to bring a torch and stick close to town so you have an escape route.

Another way to improve is through training. Ask the pub keepers, after buying a drink of course! They can guide you to trainers in fighting, critical hits, dodging and parrying, or less savory skills like lockpicking.

— QUICK START —

Just be careful out there. Some areas of Vali are more dangerous than others and you can quickly get in over your head. You're on your own to figure out where it's safe to explore. I like to camp in an area and gradually tackle unexplored territory. If the enemies are too tough I clear out and live to fight another day.

You ever heard of TPK, total party kill? It'll happen eventually, as it's a natural part of exploration when you're learning where the toughest battles lie. When it does, just pick yourself up (or what's left of you), get stronger and more powerful, then come back and get revenge.

After buying him another stout, we asked Nox Ffred for his final words of wisdom.

Don't go alone. Find friends. Six is a good number. Also, when you're praying to the gods for powers, if you want to play it safe, stick with one ability. If you're a mage, pray for intelligence. Then, when you find that magic Dragon Staff, well, Bob's your uncle, you'll be able to use it!

Look, I think someone is summoning me. Gotta run, thanks for the Ghrodwir Stout!

As you watch, Nox Ffred begins to disappear. The word *pixelated* enters your mind as his form becomes blocky and indistinct before fading away.







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SQUINTING IN THE BRIGHT SUNLIGHT, you trudge slowly up the road. Your feet ache from hours of walking, while your belly rumbles from lack of food. Your only possessions are the knife in your belt, the Writ from the Queen, your special coin of the Realm, and a few gold coins hidden in your boot.

Approaching the town gate, you see a bustle of activity as wagons enter, each one laden down with produce and goods. The guards at the gate give the wagons a cursory glance, exchanging small talk with the merchants before waving them on.

A guard shouts, “None shall pass except by order of the Margrave.”

A solitary traveler ahead of you seems to merit closer scrutiny. The guard eyes the traveler’s long robe and cowled head. When the guard asks for papers, the cowled figure pulls out a weatherbeaten book and makes a mysterious sign in the air. Scowling, the guard raises his halberd and motions for the traveler to wait inside the guardhouse.

The guard glares at you and says, “Name?”

Calming your nerves, you state your name.

“Papers?”

You cautiously hold out the Writ from the Queen. The guard’s eyes widen and he looks around nervously.

“Guard that with your life!” he whispers. “Don’t show it to anyone unless you’re sure they’re loyal to the Queen.”

You ask the guard about purchasing supplies and gathering companions to help investigate the Cultists.

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“Shhhh! Do you want to get us both killed? There’s a few folk inside who will help you. Talk to Enwar.”

The guard waves you by, shouting “Next!”

As you stride though the gate, you trust that even though you are a novice in adventuring, you can make up for your lack of ability and skill with courage and ambition.

CHARACTER CREATION

You explore Nox Archaist through the heroic deeds of a party of adventurers, or characters. Each character has a name, gender, race, ability scores, skills, spells, and equipment.

To create a character, first choose **Start a New Game** from the main game menu (see p. 16). During character creation, if you make a mistake and want to start over just press the <ESC> key.

Warning: Starting a new game will overwrite *both* save game slots. You cannot have two different sessions (with different characters) in the save game slots. To preserve an old game you should make a backup. See **MAKING A BACKUP** (p. 18).

Choose your character’s name by typing into the name field. Press <Return> when finished. Your name can be up to 14 characters long. Note that certain characters, including ~^_{}[]\| and DEL, have been replaced by custom shapes.

Next, choose your gender. Use the <Right> arrow key to cycle through the choices: MALE, FEMALE, and OTHER. Your choice of gender does not affect game play. Press <Return> to confirm your choice.

Finally, choose your race. Use the <Right> arrow key to cycle through the races and press <Return> to confirm. Your choice of race confers a small bonus but otherwise does not affect game play.

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Human: Humans tend to be taller than most races, of larger build, and are generally a jack-of-all-trades. Because of their above-average height, humans get a +2 to their initial ranged weapon skill.

Halfling: Halflings are very short humanoids, of rotund girth and cheerful disposition. Small, nimble, and quick-fingered, the halfling has a +2 to their initial lockpicking skill.


Elf: Elves are of average height and slender build, with pointed ears and a wise but melancholy visage. Elves gain a +2 to their initial intelligence score.

Dark Elf: Similar to elves in appearance but with a darker countenance, the dark elf learns quickly that they are not always welcome in Overworld society. With their need to rely on stealth and subtlety, the dark elf has a +2 to their initial critical hit skill.

Dwarf: Stalwart and stocky, the dwarf finds comfort in the tangible, down-to-earth nature of gems, gold, and steel. Trained from an early age in combat, a dwarf gains a +2 to their initial melee weapon skill.

These initial bonuses only provide a modest increase over the base scores and are meant to represent an average tendency for proficiency in a certain area. Because Nox Archaist is a class-free system, it is possible to pick any race and specialize in any skill. For example, it would be straightforward to create a dwarven mage by specializing in intelligence or a halfling assassin by specializing in the critical hit skill. See **CLASS BUILDS** (p. 33) for more ideas.

Once you are satisfied with your character, press <Return> to advance to the game story. Be sure to read through the story carefully, as it contains important clues.

 **Tip:** Starting with your initial character, you will gradually assemble a party of adventurers as you encounter them during game play. You can also drop characters off at the local inn and pick them up again later, including your own character.

ABILITIES

Strength (STR): Strength measures your ability to wield weapons, do melee damage, wear heavy armor, and take physical punishment. A higher strength gives you more hit points at each level. Your strength is also equal to the maximum weight of your readied equipment. For example, a strength of 12 means that the total weight of your readied weapons and armor must be 12 or less.

Dexterity (DEX): Your dexterity measures how agile you are and which ranged weapons you can use. A higher dexterity increases your chances to hit with melee and ranged weapons. A high dexterity also improves your odds of getting a critical hit. Dexterity bonuses are not affected by your readied equipment weight.

Intelligence (INT): Intelligence determines how many magic points you have available to cast spells. A high intelligence is required to cast certain spells and gives you an advantage on saving throws against death magic.

You can raise your ability scores by gaining a level, as described in **LEVEL UP!** (p. 32).

SKILLS & TRAINING

In addition to your three abilities, each character has the following six skills, which can be improved both by training and using the skill.

Melee: This skill measures your prowess with hand-to-hand weapons such as a sword or mace. Having a higher melee skill will cause more damage to your enemies when you strike them.

Range: This determines your skill with distance weapons such as a bow. A higher range skill gives you more damage with these weapons when you hit.

Critical hit: This skill is related to the chance of striking a devastating blow on your enemy, especially when your foe is distracted by

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the other members of your party. Your chances of getting a critical hit are also increased if you have a high dexterity. Damage from a critical hit is much higher with melee versus ranged weapons.

Dodge/parry: This skill increases your odds of avoiding hits from melee and ranged attacks and also improves your ability to dodge traps found on chests and doors. This skill is only useful if you are using light armor and weapons: your readied equipment weight must be 8 or less.

Lockpicking: This skill is essential for using picks to break into locked chests and doors. Always remember to buy enough lockpicks before an adventure. See **OPENING DOORS & CHESTS** (p. 49).

Successfully using a particular skill will automatically improve it. You can track your progress on the Skills page within your character sheet. Press the <TAB> key twice to bring up your character sheet. Then use the <Right> arrow to advance to the fourth page. Press <Space> to cycle through the characters, or <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to select a particular character.

Your progress for each skill is indicated by a number and a fraction. For example,

Lockpicking	32
	2 / 5

Here, your current lockpicking skill score is 32. The fraction, in this case $\frac{2}{5}$, indicates your progress towards the next skill score. Using a skill (such as attempting to pick a lock) will increase this fraction to $\frac{3}{5}$. When your skill progress reaches $\frac{5}{5}$ your skill score will increase to 33. The progress fraction varies depending upon the skill and character level.

You may also be able to find trainers who can help you increase your skill scores—to find them, try asking at the local pub. Each trainer is an expert in a particular skill and can offer you 6 lessons in that skill per character level. Each lesson will increase your skill by a

full point (any fractional progress is preserved). After completing 6 lessons you'll need to level up to train again. Training costs more at higher levels, so try to train as often as you can.

STATS

You can find your character's statistics in the Stats & Inventory window. Press the <TAB> key to bring up the list of characters in your party (the party roster). Then press <TAB> to display the character sheet. Press <Space> to cycle through the characters, or <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to select a particular character.

The first tab contains four pages: the Main Statistics, Readied Equipment, Combat Stats, and Skills (see screenshots p. 30–31). Use the <Left> and <Right> arrow keys to move through the pages. If you're currently on a different tab such as weapons or armor, you can use the <1> key to return to the character sheet tab.

The Main Statistics page includes the following:

Status: This indicates the current status of your character and can include conditions such as good or dead.

HP: The current hit points for your character, as a fraction of your maximum. Your current HP value is shown by the green bar on the party roster. Your maximum HP value increases each time you level up. The amount of increase is determined in part by your strength ability. If your hit points reach zero, you are dead. Any loose change in your pockets is fair game.

XP: The current experience points for your character, along with the amount needed to reach the next level. See **LEVEL UP!** (p. 32).

MP: Your current magic points, as a fraction of your maximum. Your current MP value is shown by the purple bar on the party roster. Your maximum MP is equal to your intelligence.

CHARACTERS

STR: Your strength. The WT shows the total weight of your readied equipment. This weight can never be greater than your strength.

DEX: Your dexterity.

INT: Your intelligence.

LH: The weapon or item in your left hand. There is no difference in damage or proficiency between your two hands.

RH: The weapon or item in your right hand. There is no difference in damage or proficiency between your two hands.

The <Right> arrow moves to the Readied Equipment page, which contains a list of your readied weapons and armor.

Press <Right> again to move to the Combat Stats page, which shows the following:

Modified Damage: The average amount of damage you can do with each weapon, modified for your strength and skills. See **WEAPONS** (p. 106) for details on weapons.

Armor Rating: How well your armor deflects melee or ranged damage. This number is subtracted from an enemy's weapon damage. See **ARMOR** (p. 108) for details on armor.

Resist Magic: How well you resist magical damage. This number is subtracted from the damage from an enemy's spell attack.

% To Hit: Your base chance to hit, including your dexterity modifier. A higher number is better: if the computer-generated roll is less than (% To Hit + other modifiers), then you will hit the enemy.

Press <Right> again to move to the Skills page, which shows your current skill levels and skill progression. See **SKILLS & TRAINING** (p. 26) for details.

← NOX ARCHAIST →

NOX ARCHAIST

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6]

Status: good
 Gender: male
 Race: dark elf
 Level: 3

HP - 42 / 63
 XP - 394 / 800
 MP - 2 / 8

STR - 8 WT=8
 DEX - 32
 INT - 8

LH- Bronze Dagger
 RH- Bronze Dagger

< -MORE 1/4 MORE->

Young Rev
 Bridgit
 Phyrra
Blade
 Rift
 Xanaphia

Character Stats page 1—Main Statistics

NOX ARCHAIST

[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6]

READIED EQUIPMENT

Bronze Dagger
 Bronze Dagger
 Thief Cloak +3
 Brigandine Boots
 Leather Gloves
 Thief Necklace +2

< -MORE 2/4 MORE->

Young Rev
 Bridgit
 Phyrra
Blade
 Rift
 Xanaphia

Stats page 2—Readied Equipment

← CHARACTERS →



Stats page 3—Combat Stats



Stats page 4—Skills

LEVEL UP!


Great heroes rarely appear fully formed. Instead, they are forged in the fires of struggle and adversity, which increase their mental discipline and physical prowess. Those judged worthy may even receive the blessings of the Gods: gifts of great strength, dexterity, or intelligence as both a reward and a promise of future support.

Your characters gain experience by defeating foes. You can find your experience points (XP) on the main character sheet screen. Press <TAB> twice to display this screen, then press <Space> or <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to select a particular character. The XP is given as a fraction of the number needed to reach the next level. For example,

XP -	392 / 800
------	-----------

This indicates that the character has 392 experience points out of the 800 needed to advance to the next level. See **LEVEL ADVANCEMENT** (p. 105) for the XP needed for each level. Each character can advance to a maximum of level 10.

In your inventory you should have a Coin of the Realm. The Order of Nox Archaist has imbued this coin with magical energy that allows you to commune with the Gods. When you have amassed enough experience, you will be granted a certain number of minutes of prayer, where each minute equates to an increase of 1 in strength, dexterity, or intelligence. These prayers are traditionally held at the end of a fierce battle when the Gods are most likely to commune with the worthy.

 **Tip:** When you level up and increase your abilities, you must use all of your prayer minutes and cannot save them for later. You should think carefully about what type of character you are building. Splitting your ability increases may make you more versatile but might prevent you from using magic items that have high ability requirements.

CLASS BUILDS

As an adventurer within the Realm of Vali you are free to try out many different paths and careers. You may wish to concentrate only on hand-to-hand fighting, or darting in and out of combat to strike a quick blow, or firing off *fireballs* from afar. Or, you may wish to try your hand at all of these, able to adapt to any situation.

Nox Archaist is a class-free system. Your abilities and skills determine your proficiency at melee, ranged, or magical combat, dodging attacks, picking locks, or striking a critical blow. You are free to specialize each character to fit a certain role or spread out their skills across multiple roles. However, not all character development tracks are equally effective. Weapons, armor, and spells all have strength, dexterity, or intelligence requirements. If you have trouble winning battles or equipping your characters with desired items, try following the examples of these accomplished veterans of Vali.

YOUNG REV

Dwarven Fighter

Level: 3

Trained Skills: Melee, Critical Hit

Strength: 32

Weapons: War Hammer

Dexterity: 8

Armor: Brigandine Vest, Gloves, Helm, and Boots

Intelligence: 8

Young Rev smiles as he contemplates what his friends would do without his great strength. Sure, the thief might complain about his noisy armor, but who's the one always on the front line, wading into battle to protect the frail ones in back? Young Rev puts all of his energy into increasing his strength. In combat he uses the long reach of his war hammer to quickly engage the enemy. Although it pains him to admit it, he's also been known to cast a quick healing spell on himself.

BRIDGIT

Dwarven Paladin

Level: 3

Trained Skills: Melee

Strength: 20

Weapons: Heavy Mace

Dexterity: 8

Armor: Mage Necklace +2, Brigandine

Intelligence: 20

Vest, Leather Boots, Helm, and Gloves

Combining the best qualities of the fighter and mage, Bridgit believes herself to be the glue that holds the party together. She divides her time between improving her strength and intelligence. Standing near the front of battle, Bridgit casts *fire arrow* against a couple of advancing kobolds, then hefts her heavy mace and charges. She always keeps a close eye on her friends; if any of them become wounded she can quickly cast *lesser heal*.

BLADE

Dark Elf Thief/Assassin

Level: 3

Trained Skills: Melee or Range, Critical Hit, Dodge/Parry, Lockpicking

Strength: 8

Weapons: 2 Bronze & 2 Throwing Daggers

Dexterity: 32

Armor: Thief Cloak +3, Leather Gloves,

Intelligence: 8

Brigandine Boots, Thief Necklace +2

Blade likes to stylize himself as a jack-of-all-trades, blessed with good looks and high dexterity. Weaving in and out of battle, he flicks his two throwing daggers into his target. Embracing the chaos, he pulls out two bronze daggers and stabs them into the back of a distracted foe. He's no fool; he knows wielding two weapons doubles his chances of landing a critical hit! Blade also knows that since his readied equipment weight is less than 9, he should train in dodge/parry to avoid enemy attacks. He may not be the toughest or the smartest, but by-the-gods the party would be in trouble without him.

CHARACTERS

PHYRRA

Elf Ranger

Level: 3

Trained Skills: Melee, Range

Strength: 20

Weapons: Rapier, Recurve Bow

Dexterity: 20

Armor: Thief Necklace +2, Brigandine

Intelligence: 8

Vest, Leather Boots, Helm, and Gloves

Phyrra prides herself on her speed and stealth. Comfortable in both the deep forest and the Underworld, she increases her strength and dexterity through regular exercise and meditation. When fighting, she stands on the edge of the battle, firing arrow after arrow into her enemies. If a creature comes too close, Phyrra is only too happy to draw her sword and engage in a duel. If she's hard pressed, she'll even switch to using her right hand.

XANAPHIA

Elf Mage

Level: 3

Trained Skills: Range, Dodge/Parry

Strength: 8

Weapons: Magic Staff

Dexterity: 8

Armor: Leather Boots, Cloth Gloves,

Intelligence: 32

Mage Cloak +3, Mage Necklace +2

Xanaphia, or as she likes to call herself, *Nox* Xanaphia, recognizes herself as the true leader of the party, with the brains and cleverness to match. Scoffing at armor and heavy weapons, she knows that a powerful staff and a magic cloak or ring is all anyone needs. She puts all her efforts into developing her keen intelligence. Since her readied equipment weight is less than 9, she can also take advantage of the dodge/parry skill. During battle, Xanaphia casts *fireball*+1 and *fire arrow*. If her companions are hurt she'll cast *lesser heal*. When she runs out of magic points she relies on her magic staff to blast foes from across the battlefield.

INVENTORY

Like all respectable heroes, your party has hired a group of burly yet cheerful porters to carry your belongings. To access your inventory, press the <TAB> key twice to bring up the Stats & Inventory window. Press <Space> to cycle through the characters or <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to select a particular character.

Press <TAB> (or the <2> key) to advance to the weapons tab. Press <TAB> (or <3>) to go to the armor tab. Press <TAB> (or <4>) to go to the fourth tab, containing adventuring equipment such as torches and lockpicks. Press <TAB> (or <5>) to go to the fifth tab, containing the spell list for the party. Use the <Up> and <Down> arrows to scroll through the list of weapons, armor, items, and spells.

An asterisk (*) under an item's name indicates that the item has been readied for use by the selected character. To ready an item, highlight it using the <Up> or <Down> arrows and press <Return>. To unready an item, press <Return> again.



CHARACTERS

Each item has a weight (WT). The right-hand side displays the total weight for all readied items along with the maximum weight for that character. In the screenshot, Blade has a total readied weight of 5 out of his maximum weight of 8.

The quantity (QTY) next to each item shows how many unequipped items of that type are owned by the party. A dash (—) indicates that there are no spares. For example, in the preceding screenshot you can see that Blade has readied the party's only pair of leather gloves. He is also wearing a Thief Necklace +2, and the party has one extra. Items which have spares (such as the necklace) are visible to all party members. This gives each character a chance to ready that item from the party's inventory pool.

Press <I> to view information about an item including damage, armor rating, and ability requirements. For additional information see **WEAPONS** (p. 106), **ARMOR** (p. 108), and **SPELLS** (p. 110).

You can put both hands to use by readying a two-handed weapon, a one-handed weapon in each hand, or a one-handed weapon plus a shield. An asterisk (*) is displayed underneath each weapon the character has readied. When a new item is readied the game will automatically unready the current weapon or armor.

You can use some items by pressing the <U> key. The <U> key will also let you read books, notes, and scrolls. Valuable clues can be found by using these items and reading the text.

You can discard unwanted items with the <D> key. The game won't let you discard unique items or quest items. There is also a limit to the number of items you can carry: If you receive an INVENTORY FULL message, you should discard or sell some items.

GAME SETTINGS

The sixth tab on the Stats & Inventory window, represented by the disk icon, contains various game settings. Press the <TAB> key twice to bring up the party roster and character sheets. Then press <TAB> to cycle through the tabs, or press <6> to go directly to the Game Settings.

Use the <Up> and <Down> arrows to move through the game settings. Press <Return> to cycle through the options for a particular setting. Once you have changed settings, be sure to return to the game and press <Q> to save your game along with any changes you made.

The game settings include:

Quick Combat: The options are always OFF, always ON, or always ASK. It is recommended that you leave this setting on ASK, especially for new players, since Quick Combat may not always be advisable. See **QUICK COMBAT** (p. 72).

Mature Dialog: The options are OFF or ON. When changing this setting you will be prompted for your four-digit password.

Change Password: Change the game password, used for the mature dialog setting. Passwords must be four digits long, and only numbers are accepted. The default password is 1234, which, coincidentally, is the same combination that Nox Ffred uses for his luggage.

Toggle Font: Toggle between the Nox Archaist font and a classic Apple II font. To load the new font, you'll need to save your game and restart. The main menu always uses the Nox Archaist font; this setting only affects the font used during game play.





ADVENTURING

REIGNING IN YOUR HORSE, you gaze across the grasslands at a distant plume of smoke. As the wind shifts, you smell the scent of burned timbers mixed with charred crops and livestock.

As you ride closer, you see the remains of a small village. A few figures move listlessly through the haze, gathering belongings from the smoldering ruins. The bodies of several villagers lie in the road, many with crude arrows stuck into them.

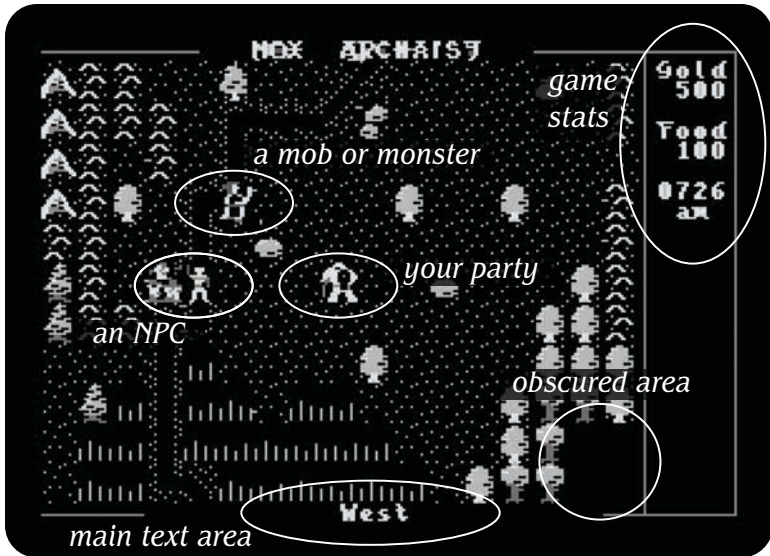
You see a man leaning against the single remaining structure: the stone foundation of the local mill. As you approach, you see that his face is coated with soot, his jacket is tattered and charred, and the sword in his hand is notched and blood stained. An orc lies dead at his feet.

The man looks up at you. “Will you help us?”

USER INTERFACE

In Nox Archaist, most of your time will be spent exploring the Realm of Vali. The Realm is divided into three main regions. The **Overworld** contains the above-ground regions of grasslands, forests, rivers, ocean, and mountains. The Overworld also contains ruins of ancient castles, ready for you to explore. The **Underworld** consists of an extensive network of caverns and tunnels that are home to terrible monsters and fabulous treasures. The **Civilized** areas are the towns and castles where you can meet NPCs, buy supplies, and rest.

NOX ARCHAIST



The game screen is divided into three sections, as seen in the screenshot above. The largest section is the map of your current location. On the right side are the game statistics, including the party's current number of gold pieces, the party's food rations, and the current time. The bottom of the screen contains the main text area, which displays messages such as the most recent command, the results of a search, or interactive questions.

While traveling, your line of sight may be obscured by mountains, trees, buildings, or other objects. Obscured areas will become visible if you move into that area or move around the obstruction.

During your travels you may perform the following actions:

Move: Use the arrow keys to move. Your party icon will always be at the center of the map. As you move, the map will scroll beneath your character, revealing new areas in your direction of travel.

Attack: Press the <A> key to attack an enemy. Outside of combat you'll be asked in which direction you want to attack. During combat

you'll use the arrow keys to cycle through different targets. See **COMBAT** (p. 71) for details.

Board Transport: To board a ship or ride a horse or other mount, move your character on top of the ship or mount and then press .

Cast Spell: Use the <C> key to cast a spell, followed by a number giving the spell slot. You will then be asked which character will cast the spell. See **MAGIC** (p. 55) for details on spell slots and casting.

Change Icon: The <=> key will allow you to “choose your hero” by cycling through the icons you can use for your party. The same key will also change the icon used for each party member during combat.

Character Roster: Use the <TAB> key to display the list of characters in your party. Press <TAB> again to bring up your inventory. See **INVENTORY** (p. 36).

Dig: The <D> key will dig out rubble from blocked passages in ruins. Don't forget to bring a pickaxe. See **DIGGING** (p. 52).

Exit Transport: Press <X> to leave a ship or dismount from a horse or other mount. Watch out for horse thieves. See **RIDING** (p. 45).

Fire Cannon: Press <F> to fire a cannon while on board a ship. See **SHIP COMBAT** (p. 75).

Get Location: Press <G> to display your general location. For example: the name of the dungeon, town, or castle that you're currently in.

Help: Press <?> to display a list of keyboard shortcuts.

Hide and Camp: The <H> key will allow your party to rest for 8 hours and recover health and magic. See **CAMPING & RESTING** (p. 52).

Ignite Torch: The <I> key will light a torch if you have one (and don't already have one lit). See **LIGHT** (p. 51).

Jump with Horse: Press <J> to jump over rivers while riding a horse.

← NOX ARCHAIS? →

Look: Use the <L> key, followed by an arrow key, to get a description of a tile adjacent to you.

New Character Order: Press <N> to change the character order in your party roster. The order determines starting positions during combat and is used to assign characters to the role of “melee” or “range weapon/spellcaster” during Quick Combat (see p. 72).

Open or Operate Object: Use the <O> key to interact with doors, chests, or levers. This key can also be used to discover and open secret doors. Open and search can both be used to open treasure chests. See **Search** for information on stealing.

Pass: Use the <Space> key to wait a turn.

Quest Log: Press the </> key to display a list of your active quests. Press any key to advance through multiple pages.

Quick Save: Press <Q> to save your game at any time except during combat. See **SAVING YOUR GAME** (p. 54).

Search: The <S> key, followed by a direction, will search a nearby square for treasure, secret doors, or other items. If searching a chest or other item might alert the guards then the game will issue a warning and will ask whether you wish to proceed.

Sound Volume: The <V> key will toggle audio between sound effects and music, only sound effects, only music, or no sounds or music.

Talk to NPC: Use <T> plus a direction to engage in conversation. See **TALKING WITH NPCS** (p. 46).

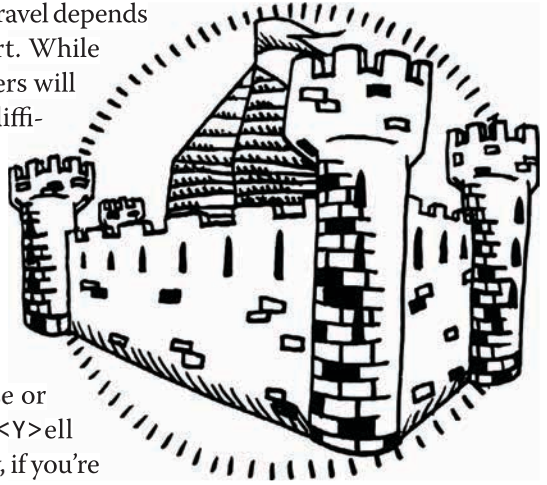
Wait: To have your party wait a specified number of hours, press <W> followed by a number. This can be useful when you arrive at the armorer at 4 AM...

Yell at Transport: Press <Y> to yell and make your horse or other mount go faster. Press <Y> again to slow down.


OVERWORLD

The Overworld contains the above ground regions of grasslands, forests, rivers, ocean, and mountains. During your travels in the Overworld, your party will travel together as a single unit, represented by a single icon.

Your party may travel by walking, riding, sailing, or swimming. Your speed of travel depends upon your mode of transport. While walking, you and the monsters will travel at the same speed. In difficult terrain such as hills, forest, or swamp, you will move slightly faster than pursuing enemies. You can sometimes use this to shake monsters off of your tail. Another way to shake off pursuers is to ride a horse or other mount and use the <Y>ell command to go faster. Finally, if you're being pursued and you enter a city, the guards will swarm out and clear off the attackers.



During your travels you may encounter unfamiliar terrain, objects, or signposts. You can use the <L>ook command to examine these.

 **Tip:** Your map of the Isles of Wynmar can be used to guide you in your travels (see p. 114). However, the mapmaker's knowledge is limited: towns may be misplaced, rivers can shift, and unknown islands may appear. In addition, the Isles of Wynmar are vast; the wise adventurer would do well to explore outside the boundaries of the map.

SAILING & SWIMMING

The Isles of Wynmar are surrounded by a vast and deep ocean. Sailing between the islands is common and is the primary means of transporting goods and people. However, sailing the high seas is not without its risks, including pirates, storms, and creatures of the deep.

You can purchase sailing vessels of varying sizes from the shipwright. These include skiffs and caravels for coastal exploration and frigates for ocean voyages. There are four different types of water areas:



Surf: safe for swimming, skiffs, caravels



Shallow Water: safe for skiffs, caravels



Deep Water: safe for skiffs, caravels



Rough Seas: safe for caravels (short distances), frigates

Although frigates can only sail in rough seas, they are equipped with a skiff for shallower waters. Press the <X> key to exit your frigate and board your skiff. Press <X> again once you've reach shore. To rejoin your frigate, first press to board the skiff, then sail on top of the frigate, then press again. Your frigate can carry up to two skiffs; it always helps to have a spare in case you forget where you moored one of them.


You can fight enemies while on board a frigate or caravel, but not while on a skiff. For more information see **SHIP COMBAT** (p. 75).

Your party can swim short distances along the shorelines, but remember that armor and weapons are heavy and can quickly drag you down to a watery grave. Due to the mountainous terrain, the rivers of Wynmar are filled with treacherous rapids. Horses are capable of fording or jumping across these rivers. Only the very strong or foolish attempt to cross on foot. Your safest bet is to find a bridge.

RIDING

As you travel the world, you and your party will have the opportunity to ride horses or more exotic mounts. Horses and other mounts usually travel at a leisurely pace. If you want to go faster, press <Y> to yell. Horses will then travel twice as fast, while other mounts may move even faster. Press <Y> again to slow down.

When you acquire horses or other mounts, you are gaining enough for the entire party. Merchants charge the same amount regardless of how many companions you have.

 **Tip:** Horse thieves in populated areas are a rampant problem. Savvy adventurers never bring their horses into a town or castle and instead choose to leave them outside.

CIVILIZATION

During your travels around the Isles of Wynmar you'll need to rest, replenish supplies, and perhaps share a pint or three with the local populace. You'll find all of this and more in the villages, towns, and castles of Vali.

The areas of civilization are mostly peaceful places. Townsfolk expect polite behavior, and any infractions of the law will be dealt with harshly. Robbing or attacking citizens is especially frowned upon; the guards tend to swing first and ask questions later.

As you explore the civilized areas, you may notice that the people of Vali are generally conservative in their architecture. Common folk and pub keepers use plain orange-wood for their doors. Merchants and shopkeepers tend to paint their doors green. Archmages, healers,



and important personages prefer doors stained with the rich lapis lazuli blue from the dwarven mines of Ghrodwir.

If you find yourself at a loss for what to do next, talk to the captain of the guard. With all of the current troubles, they'll be grateful for help. If you're stuck on a quest, try asking the local pub keeper. For paying customers, they can be a wealth of information. They hear many complaints and rumors from their patrons. They don't repeat gossip, so listen carefully.

TALKING WITH NPCs

On your journeys you will encounter many people within Queen Isa's Realm. Some of these non-player characters (NPCs) will be willing to help you with advice, trade goods, or even join your party. Others may ask you for help in exchange for their gratitude and possibly a reward.


The people that you encounter are busy with their own lives. Most merchants are only available during the daytime and many of them like to sleep in or take long lunch breaks. If you can't find a particular NPC, your best bet is to either talk to someone else or wait (using <W>) for the hours to pass.

When you encounter an NPC, press <T> key to begin a conversation. You have a conversation by typing single words. All NPCs will respond to the words NAME and JOB except for merchants, who are much too busy to engage in small talk. Some NPCs will respond to the word JOIN, which asks them if they would like to join your party.

During your conversation you may notice that some words are in uppercase. For example, see the word TOWN in the screenshot. This indicates that the NPC knows more about that topic and will respond with more information if asked. An NPC may also suggest that you talk to someone else. Pay close attention to what they suggest as the other NPC won't have those keywords in uppercase.



For example, if an NPC suggests that you talk to Bob the Blacksmith about a magic sword, you'll need to remember to ask him using the keyword SWORD.

 **Tip:** You only need to type the first four letters of a keyword for it to be recognized by the game.

You can use three voice modes while talking: *normal*, *whisper*, and *yell*. Use <TAB> to toggle between the modes. The appropriate voice mode will usually be apparent from the situation. For example, in a loud pub you might need to yell to be heard, or the one-eyed pirate might prefer to whisper the location of her hidden treasure.

Certain NPCs may ask you to perform tasks for them in exchange for information, thus triggering a quest. You can use the </> key to bring up your list of quests. Completing a quest will remove it from this list. Remember to report back to the person who gave you that quest, as they sometimes will give you a reward or provide further information.

JESTERS & HOW TO AVOID THEM

Jesters have sometimes been known to follow adventurers around as they explore. They will stand behind you and giggle incessantly. They may think they are really funny, but even the most stalwart adventurer has occasionally been annoyed to death.

This behavior is not endorsed by the Royal Jester Academy. Fortunately these rogue jesters can be repelled by saying the most boring word in existence. Jesters avoid boredom at all costs.

CRANKY MERCHANTS

To be a successful adventurer you'll need courage, luck, determination and, most importantly, you'll need supplies.

Since your characters are smart enough to hunt for themselves, you will never starve, even if you run out of food rations. However, to regain health and magic while resting, you'll need food rations. Each character can carry up to 150 rations.

While it's possible to adventure without torches, enemies will often creep up on you in the darkness. You'll need lockpicks to open doors and treasure chests. You'll also want weapons, armor, and spells. All of these items can be bought from the honest (if cranky) merchants in the towns and castles of Vali.


When you visit a shop, press <T> to talk to the merchant. The merchant will present you with a list of available items and their prices. Scroll through the list with the arrow keys and press <Return> to buy an item. There are usually more items than will fit on one screen, so be sure to continue scrolling.

Press <S> to sell items. You can also press the <TAB> key or <2>–<5> to go to the different categories. Use the arrow keys to highlight an item and then press <Return>. You can then accept or reject the merchant's offer, or sell all of that item if you have more than one.

Most items can be sold, including weapons, armor, books, gems, and scrolls. You can sell an item to any merchant but you'll get more money if you sell to someone that carries that item. If you're unsure about whether an item is necessary for a quest, just try selling it: Merchants will refuse to buy anything related to a quest. Saving the world is your job; they don't need the extra work.


As discussed in **INVENTORY** (p. 36), the QTY column shows unreadied items. To sell readied items you will need to unreadied them first and then talk to the merchant again.

To return to buying items, either press <TAB> repeatedly, press (for buy), or press <7>.

 **Tip:** Gems can be found deep in the mines. A few merchants also sell gems. Gems in Nox Archaist don't produce any special effects if you try to <U>se them. However, your cheerful porters can only carry 9999 gold. If you're nearing the limit, buying gems is a convenient way to store your wealth.

OPENING DOORS & CHESTS

You can use the <O>pen key to open doors and chests. If the door or chest is locked, you can try to pick the lock. The highlighted character is active and will attempt to lockpick. To change the active character use <SPACE> or <Shift> plus <1>–<6>. If you fail to pick the lock, your lockpick will break and you might trigger a trap. Your dodge/parry skill will help you avoid getting hit by traps.

 **Tip:** Regions of Vali that are full of dangerous creatures also tend to have more cunning traps on doors and chests. If you're having trouble surviving in a region, or if you haven't succeeded after several lockpick attempts, you may need to come back later when your skills are higher.

UNDERWORLD

After King Silus recovered the magic crystals from the Depths of Vacous, the surviving orcs, kobolds, and gnomes retreated to the dark corners to bide their time. Since then, the Underworld has existed only as whispered tales of buried treasure and nameless horrors. In your quest to save the world of Vali, you will need to find the lost entrances and descend into the depths. To survive you will need both might and wits.

Since most doors and treasure chests will be locked, you'll need to bring a large supply of lockpicks along with someone highly skilled in using them. The Underworld also contains secret doors. If you find yourself unable to advance, try opening doorways (using <O>)



Delve ye now unto the deep, where treasure swells and evil creeps!

in dead-end passageways. Don't forget to <S>earch bookcases, dressers, chests, and piles of moldering bones for keys and treasure.


Some areas of the Underworld are small hidey-holes, packed with wretched orcs. Other areas are vast, with ladders that descend many levels down. Only the most brave or foolhardy adventurer tries to memorize the twisty passages, and fools rarely make it back to the surface in one piece. If you forget where you are, you can use the <G> key to get your current location. However, the wise adventurer always brings along a trusty henchman who can make maps.

Finally, not all denizens of the Underworld are evil. Some may be able to help you or even join your party. It never hurts to ask. Just don't bother the cranky miners; they don't like trespassers.

LIGHT

You need light to explore and fight. In the Realm of Vali, sunrise is at 5:30 AM while sunset is at 8:30 PM. In daylight your sight is limited only by the obstacles surrounding you. At night or in the Underworld you will only be able to see a short distance.

Be sure to stock up on torches. Lighting a torch will allow you to see further and may help you avoid enemies and obstacles. Don't worry! Most monsters have such a keen sense of smell that torchlight won't unduly attract their attention. However, there are some particularly dumb monsters who think that if you can't see them, then they can't see you.

 **Tip:** When the sun sets, floor and street tiles slowly change from orange to blue to simulate moonlight. When the sun rises, those tiles change back to orange to simulate sunlight.



DIGGING


In your travels through the ruins of abandoned castles you may occasionally encounter piles of rubble blocking forgotten passageways. If you've managed to acquire a pickaxe (hint: they aren't for sale!), you can sometimes <D>ig your way through the blockage. Areas of rubble in the Underworld are just too deep to dig through; whomever lies beyond these regions is best left undisturbed.

CAMPING & RESTING

Adventuring is hard work, especially when you're trying to defeat monsters and save the Realm. At some point you'll want to rest and regain your health.

Press <H> to hide and camp. Camping takes eight hours of game time and is only allowed when there are no hostile creatures in the area. If you have food rations, your characters will restore hit points and magic points to 75% of their maximum (sleeping out of doors isn't comfortable). If your characters don't need rest, you'll still spend the eight hours but you won't consume any food rations. You can camp outdoors, in the Underworld, or on board a ship. Although camping in towns and castles is discouraged by the guards, it may sometimes be possible in certain areas of towns.

In towns and castles you can rest at an inn for a modest price. At the inn your characters will always rest until the next morning, regardless of when you go to sleep. Your party will then be at full hit points and magic points, ready to head off into the wilderness for more adventures.

 **Tip:** Since rest from camping only partially restores your health, before resting you may wish to cast healing spells to bring your hit points up to their maximum.

HEALING & RAISE DEAD

Inevitably you will get injured: the stray arrow from a goblin, glancing off your shield and grazing your arm; the wolf tearing at your leg through your leather armor; the *fireball* cast by a party member that inadvertently roasts you.

The quickest way to heal is to cast a healing spell on yourself or other party members. Camping partially heals wounds and regains magic points. You can fully recover hit points and magic points by either resting at an inn or visiting the temple healer.

In the unfortunate event that one of your party is killed, the temple healer can resurrect them for a suitable tithing to the Gods. It is also rumored that powerful members of the Order possess the ability to resurrect the dead.



"I hate bringing people back from the dead. It's not a pretty picture. I don't like doing it!"

SAVING YOUR GAME

You may find yourself facing a battle where the odds are against you. Or, at the end of a long night of adventuring, you may want to save your game. You can save your progress at any time outside of combat by pressing the <Q> key followed by <1> or <2> for the desired save slot. If you are playing via floppy disks you will be prompted to insert the **OVERWORLD** disk. Once the game is saved you can safely turn off your Apple II computer or close your emulator application. To resume a saved game, choose **Continue Game** from the main menu, and then choose which save slot to restore.

When choosing save slots, you might consider reserving one slot for less-frequent saves when you know you are at a safe location. Use the other slot for more frequent saves while out adventuring. That way, if you accidentally save your game in an unwinnable situation (for example, in a dungeon with unbeatable foes blocking the exit), you can resume your game at the safe location.

If you want more than two saved games (for example as an extra backup or with a different set of characters) you should make a backup copy; see **MAKING A BACKUP** (p. 18).

Warning: Some emulators allow you to save and restore the current emulator state. Because Nox Archaist caches information to disk during play, using an emulator's save state will give unexpected results and may result in corrupted games. You should never use a saved emulator state. Instead, always start your game session with a fresh restart of your emulator.





MAGIC

YOU HAVE MANAGED TO TRACK THE ORCS to their hidden lair deep in the mountains. Before you yawns the cave entrance, cunningly concealed by branches and rocks. You advance slowly into the cave. You hear the others in your party blundering about, stumbling over unseen rocks. “By the gods it’s dark in here!” the fighter exclaims as he cracks his skull against the cavern roof.

Raising your staff, you cry out “*Illuminare*” in a booming voice. Radiant light spreads outward from your staff. Near the back of the cavern you can dimly see a wooden ladder poking up from a hole. Tightening your grip on your staff, you and your companions descend into the depths, the staff lighting your way.


MAGIC POINTS

Every character in Nox Archaist can cast spells. Your ability to cast a particular spell is determined by the minimum intelligence for that spell and your current number of magic points. More powerful spells require a higher intelligence and cost more magic points to cast. When you cast a spell, your current magic points are reduced by the cost of that spell. You can cast the same spell multiple times as long as you have enough magic points. Your maximum number of magic points is equal to your intelligence.

You can regain magic points by camping, resting at an inn, or being healed in a temple. When you gain a level, you can use your prayer minutes to increase your intelligence, which also increases your maximum magic points. See **LEVEL UP!** (p.32) for details.

SPELL SLOTS

The party carries an enchanted Magus Tome which houses their known spells. Each spell contains an extreme concentration of magical energy. Your party, being mere mortals, cannot commune with more than a handful of these magical forces at one time. Common wisdom found in Glazinflop's *Guide to Arcane Spells, Underground Smells, and Magical Fungus* suggests the number of the communing shall be no more than 10. Eleven is right out. Exceeding this limit is rumored to cause a magical vortex to appear and devastate the land.

 **Tip:** You acquire new spells by purchasing scrolls at magic shops, finding them in treasure chests, or searching in bookcases or other hidden places. You only need one copy of a spell for the party. Duplicate spell scrolls can be sold at magic shops.

To ready new spells, open up your Magus Tome using the spell tab <5> in the Stats & Inventory window. Here, you can assign up to 10 spells to the spell casting slots. To assign (or ready) a spell, use the arrow keys to highlight the spell then press <Return>, followed by the slot number corresponding to the keyboard shortcuts <0>–<9>. The spell casting slots are shared among all party members, and do not need to be assigned for each character. As long as one of your characters meets the requirement, you'll be able to assign the spell to a slot. To avoid blasting the consciousness of less-gifted party members, only characters who possess the necessary intelligence will be able to cast that spell.

To unready a currently assigned spell, press <Return>. To change the slot for a spell, first unready the spell and then press <Return> again to pick a new slot. Since you can only change spell assignments outside of battle, the wise mage will think carefully about which spells to prepare for an adventure, and will also inscribe the assigned spell slots on a piece of parchment for quick consultation. Many recall the tale of Nox Igvius, whose entire party was wiped out when instead of casting *divine heal*, he inadvertently cast *fireball*.

SPELLS

What follows is a compendium of all spells known to the Order. The Caretaker of the Great Library of Nourtheld, Nox Styx, continuously seeks the notes of the archmages. These are presented here in an annotated collection for members of the Order. She wishes to emphasize that, whenever possible, the apprentice mages who helped to verify spell effects were willing volunteers.

Each spell has its common name and its ancient name, as inscribed in the Magus Tome. Each spell also has the minimum intelligence, the number of magic points used, the area of effect, and the damage. Spells with a (?) for their statistics are so rare that little is known. Attack spells can only be used in combat, while healing spells can be used anytime. A few spells can only be used outside of combat and are noted as such. Spells with an area of effect will never damage the spellcaster but can damage both your enemies and friends—use caution when casting! For a summary table see **SPELLS** (p. 110).

BLADE SMITE

Level: 4

Intelligence: 38

Magic Points: 14

Ictus Ferrum

Area of Effect: One enemy

Damage: 63

For the untrained, wielding a sword is an invitation to disaster. How much better, then, to summon a flying sword of magical energy to impale a target without risk to the caster? For those who believe discretion is the better part of valor, this spell has great appeal.

BLADE STORM

Level: 4

Intelligence: 38

Magic Points: 69

Tempestas Ferrum

Area of Effect: All enemies

Damage: 30

Why stop at just a single sword when you can have many? With *Tempestas Ferrum*, the caster conjures multiple swords out of thin air, simultaneously striking targets across the battlefield.

BOULDER SMITE

Level: 3
Intelligence: 26
Magic Points: 10

Ictus Petra

Area of Effect: One enemy
Damage: 47

Oftentimes spells are inspired by events observed in nature. Many years ago, after a wandering archmage encountered a boulder-hurling giant, she sought a means to magically achieve the same effect. The result is *Ictus Petra*. When cast, a huge boulder appears out of thin air, rolling with great speed into the targeted foe and squashing them flat.

BOULDER STORM

Level: 3
Intelligence: 26
Magic Points: 16

Tempestas Petra

Area of Effect: All enemies
Damage: 26

This spell is just like *Ictus Petra*, but the boulders crush all upon whom it is cast. Based on damage at the site, it is believed that this spell was utilized to end the uprising at Grymvi Keep.

CHAIN LIGHTNING

Level: 8
Intelligence: 86
Magic Points: 39

Fulmina Pluralitas Intermedia

Area of Effect: Medium
Damage: 188

A fork of electrical energy shoots from the caster's outstretched arms, striking one foe after another, causing their bones to glow from within. Not recommended for use under water. Contrary to rumors, the apprentice upon whom this spell was tested did indeed make a full recovery.

CHAIN LIGHTNING+1

Level: 9
Intelligence: 98
Magic Points: 43

Fulmina Pluralitas Laxatus

Area of Effect: Large
Damage: 149

Even more lightning forks than its younger sibling, this spell will leave witnesses quaking with fear. At least those who are left standing.



COWMAGEDDON

Level: 9
Intelligence: ?
Magic Points: ?

Summonitus La Vache

Area of Effect: Special
Damage: ?

Little is known of this strange and wondrous spell. Rumor has it that the spell was created by the Archmage Nox Tremmel in a fit of bovine madness. The only known witness to a casting of this spell died shortly afterwards in a paroxysm of mooing and lowing. All divinations suggest this spell should be used with utmost caution. If you survive, please document the results for the archives.

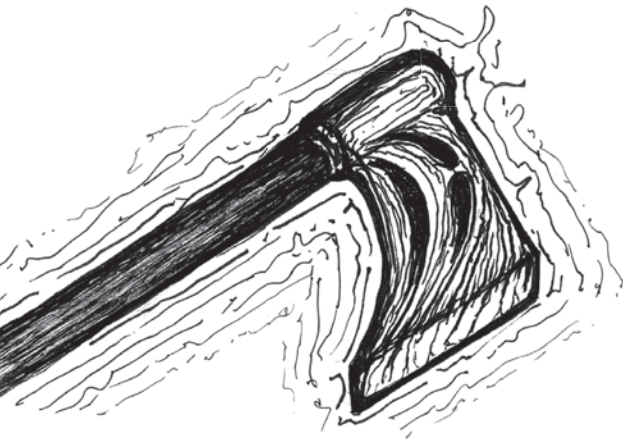
DIVINE HEAL

Level: 5
Intelligence: 50
Magic Points: 17

Medicor Pluralitas

Area of Effect: Party
Damage: —

In addition to spells of offense, the Order of Nox Archaist tries to help the weak and suffering with spells such as *Medicor Pluralitas*. This spell can be used to provide mass healing for the entire party.



ED'S AXE OF ANGUISH

Level: 5

Intelligence: 50

Magic Points: 25

It's unclear why Ed (or Eddie to his friends) created this spell. But everyone can attest to its terrible effect. As documented in the trial notes of Burruk Brewmane of Ghrodwir, "Ed's Axe? Aye! Imagine th' weeicht o' an anguished sool, filled wi' despair o' lost loves an' futile battles. Noo imagine aw 'at wrapped up n' an axe comin' towards yer heed! Yoo'd nae hae dain onie different!"

Securis Edis Dolor

Area of Effect: All enemies

Damage: 40

ENGAGE ENEMY

Level: 2

Intelligence: 14

Magic Points: 10

For those who can't wait to cross swords with the enemy, this spell moves the entire party into melee combat range between one step and the next, taking opponents by surprise.

Adversarius Traversia

Area of Effect: Party

Damage: —

FIRE ARROW

Level: 2

Intelligence: 14

Magic Points: 6

Who needs a bow when one can conjure flaming arrows out of the ether? Not the strongest of spells, *Arundinis Flamma* is one of the first spells learned by new mages as it takes little effort to cast.

Arundinis Flamma

Area of Effect: One enemy

Damage: 34



FIREBALL

Level: 2

Intelligence: 14

Magic Points: 10

Flamma Pluralitas Simpuli

Area of Effect: Small

Damage: 48

This spell causes a ball of flaming energy to streak towards the caster's enemies with a whoosh and explode with a thunderous roar.

Irene of Everton notes that this spell is such a crowd pleaser that she has begun hiring mages to provide pyrotechnic displays for the traveling bards that stop at her pub.

FIREBALL+1

Level: 3

Intelligence: 26

Magic Points: 15

Flamma Pluralitas Intermedia

Area of Effect: Medium

Damage: 47

An even larger ball of flaming energy, *Flamma Pluralitas Intermedia* is useful for cutting down groups of goblins or softening up larger foes. As every alchemist knows, if a little does a little, a lot does a lot!

FIREBALL+2

Level: 4

Intelligence: 38

Magic Points: 21

Flamma Pluralitas Laxatus

Area of Effect: Large

Damage: 42

A huge flaming ball, *Flamma Pluralitas Laxatus* fills most of the battlefield with its powerful explosion. Just be careful with this one, as the blast is so powerful that the caster can easily include both friend and foe in the inferno. *Dulce periculum!*

GREATER HEAL

Level: 4
 Intelligence: 38
 Magic Points: 4

Medicor Gigantis

Area of Effect: One character
 Damage: —

Medicor Gigantis is a more potent form of *Medicor Simpuli*. It is useful for curing terrible wounds and saving a person's life. The spell can be used on the caster or another person.

GREATER ILLUMINATE

Level: 4
 Intelligence: 38
 Magic Points: 4

Illuminare Gigantis

Area of Effect: Large (non-combat)
 Damage: —

More powerful than the humble *Illuminare*, this spell casts bright light in a wide radius. Guaranteed to attract all of the moths in the area.

ILLUMINATE

Level: 1
 Intelligence: 8
 Magic Points: 1

Illuminare

Area of Effect: Medium (non-combat)
 Damage: —

The *Illuminare* spell casts a warm glow around the party. Every evening in Nourtheld Castle, watch for young apprentices renewing *Illuminare* upon the lanterns, slow-moving geese, and sometimes even a dozing guard!

INFERNAL BLAST

Level: 7
 Intelligence: 74
 Magic Points: 23

Bucinum Flamma

Area of Effect: One enemy
 Damage: 167

A momentary rift between the planes is created using this spell, allowing the raw flame and terrible energies of the infernal realm to lick and curl upon the face of Vali. Do not worry if one hears a guttural laughter from beyond the flame; there are no reports of anything escaping through the rift. Yet.

LESSER HEAL

Level: 1
Intelligence: 8
Magic Points: 2

Medicor Simpuli

Area of Effect: One character
Damage: —

One of the first spells taught to novices, *Medicor Simpuli* can be used to staunch wounds, bind broken bones, and cure simple diseases.

LIGHTNING BLAST

Level: 6
Intelligence: 62
Magic Points: 20

Fulmina

Area of Effect: One enemy
Damage: 120

What mage hasn't dreamed of channeling the wrath of storms? With focus, the mage can seize strands of light and call forth bolts from a clear sky. Where the enemy once stood is now a smoking crater.

LIGHTNING BLAST+1

Level: 8
Intelligence: 86
Magic Points: 26

Magna Fulmina

Area of Effect: One enemy
Damage: 188

Helen Todnostril records in *The Undertales of Ghrodwir* that this spell was an ancient mage's attempt to cross *Flamma Pluralitas Simpuli* with *Fulmina*. While not quite delivering a chain of fireballs in the shape of a lightning bolt, it did result in a spectacular blast. Not recommended for use indoors, or to motivate apprentices.

LIGHTNING BLAST+2

Level: 9
Intelligence: 98
Magic Points: 29

Summa Fulmina

Area of Effect: One enemy
Damage: 255

Never let anyone say that members of the Order fear to push the boundaries of the arcane arts! Our very own Nox Oculus, Archus Magus of Vali, applied a rational approach to refining the effects of *Magna Fulmina* to create *Summa Fulmina*, an extreme concentration of elemental forces. Rumor has it that the Bayport Cathedral will have the stained glass restored soon.

MAGE ARMOR

Level: 3
Intelligence: 26
Magic Points: 3

The caster conjures an energy cloak that surrounds their form, improving the caster's armor rating. *Note to self—results mixed. Select test subjects with a weaker flinch reflex.*

Armis Magus

Area of Effect: Spell caster
Damage: —

MAGIC MISSILE

Level: 1
Intelligence: 8
Magic Points: 3

Darts of magical energy leap from the caster's fingers, flying unerringly towards their target. This spell is not very powerful but can be learned by anyone, making it a favorite of pranksters and vandals.

Arundinis Magica

Area of Effect: One enemy
Damage: 17

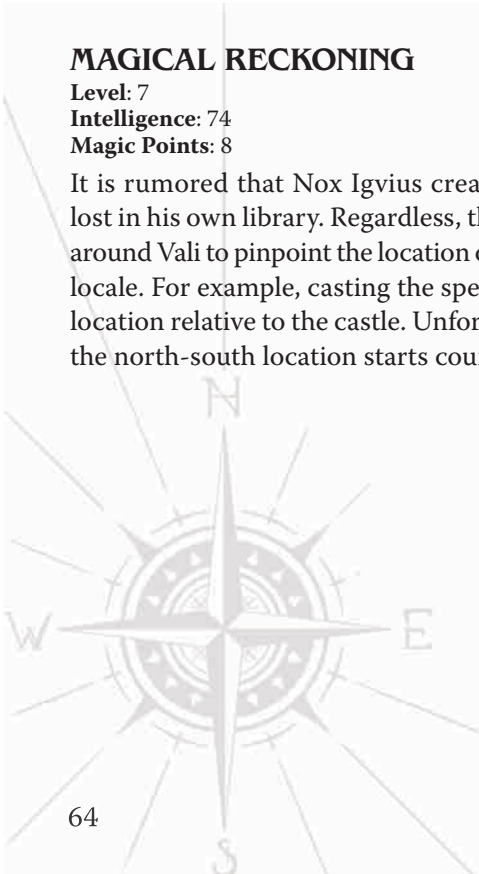
MAGICAL RECKONING

Level: 7
Intelligence: 74
Magic Points: 8

It is rumored that Nox Igvius created *Locus Magica* after he got lost in his own library. Regardless, this spell uses the magic crystals around Vali to pinpoint the location of the caster within their current locale. For example, casting the spell within a castle will reveal the location relative to the castle. Unfortunately, due to a scribe's error, the north-south location starts counting from the top of the map.

Locus Magica

Area of Effect: Party (non-combat)
Damage: —



NOX NECROSIS

Level: 9

Intelligence: ?

Magic Points: ?

Necatus

Area of Effect: One enemy

Damage: ?

A ball of darkness forms over your open palm, filled with wisps of black smoke. As you gently toss the ball towards your enemy, time seems to slow. The sphere leaves a trail of ice crystals which shatter with a sickening smell of decay. The eyes of your foe widen as the ball swiftly grows to envelop them. As the ball suddenly shrinks to nothing, the air rushes in with a crack. Of your foe, no trace can be found.

Necatus is based upon the dark magic used by undead lords such as the Death Knight. No member of the Order has ever successfully cast it. The spell is thought to only be effective against living creatures, and only when the caster has superior intelligence to their foe. As carved upon the gate to Er-Thuath Keep: *In absentia lucis, tenebrae vincunt.*

NOX VORTEX

Level: 10

Intelligence: ?

Magic Points: ?

Necatus Pluralitas

Area of Effect: Cone

Damage: ?

When the original Nourtheld Castle was destroyed, only a few charred pages of *Necatus Pluralitas* were recovered. According to the fragments, the spell was capable of summoning a cone of absolute darkness that shredded time and space, consigning any caught within to the nine hells. Notes in the margin suggest that although many mages thought themselves capable, few survived to claim mastery over this affront to the natural order. *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.*

QUICK EXIT

Level: 4

Intelligence: 38

Magic Points: 4

Exitus Expedire

Area of Effect: Party (non-combat)

Damage: —

This is the spell made famous in *Theobold the Courageous: Escape from Vacous, the Musical*. Theobold first uses *Exitus Expedire* in the town of Maldac while trying on a pair of fine leather gloves. Later, the courageous knight uses the spell while being pursued by a rabid gang of kobolds in the Underworld. Guaranteed to work in any situation except combat, this spell will instantly transport the caster's party to the Overworld.

RESURRECT

Level: 6

Intelligence: 62

Magic Points: 51

Necatus Resurrectus

Area of Effect: One character

Damage: —

Just as *Necatus* and *Necatus Pluralitas* are used to bring death to enemies, the *Necatus Resurrectus* spell is used to mend the fabric of existence. When one has the audacity to re-tie the strings of fate, even death itself can be undone, bringing life back to a fallen comrade. Take heed though, for none cross back over the dark river unchanged.

SALLY FORTH (WIZARD PORTAL) *Traversia Portale*

Level: 6

Intelligence: 62

Magic Points: ?

Area of Effect: Party (non-combat)

Damage: —

Traversia Portale provides the caster and their companions a handy means of rapid transit from their current location through the astral dimension to a matching gate. The matching gate must have been previously created using a crystal orb. A favorite of erudite arch-mages the world over! *Mea navis aëricumbens anguillis abundant.*

SHOCK ENEMY

Adversarius Electrium

Level: 5

Area of Effect: One enemy

Intelligence: 50

Damage: 87

Magic Points: 17

When this spell is cast, a ball of electrical energy surrounds the target, sending sharp jabbing bolts of lightning into them from all directions. *Please let me know if you see my cat Whiskers.*

SHOCK STORM

Tempestas Electrium Simplici

Level: 5

Area of Effect: Small

Intelligence: 50

Damage: 125

Magic Points: 25

A simple inversion of the somatic components produces this enhanced version of *Adversarius Electrium*, shooting painful lightning bolts into anyone inside the sphere.

SHOCK STORM+1

Tempestas Electrium Intermedia

Level: 6

Area of Effect: Medium

Intelligence: 62

Damage: 120

Magic Points: 30

Increasing emphasis on the verbal components enhances the effects of *Tempestas Electrium* even further, shooting searing bolts of lightning into anyone unfortunate enough to be inside.

SHOCK STORM+2

Tempestas Electrium Laxatus

Level: 7

Area of Effect: Large

Intelligence: 74

Damage: 107

Magic Points: 34

It defies propriety to mention the physical components used to supercharge the *Electrium* spell to this level. Despite this, the diligent student who perseveres will be rewarded with a tremendous sphere of electrical energy that covers the battlefield, sending excruciating blasts of lightning into everyone inside, friend and foe alike. Truly, it may be the greatest and last thing the caster ever sees.

SUMMON DEMON LORD

Level: 8

Intelligence: ?

Magic Points: ?

Daemonis Summonitus

Area of Effect: Special

Damage: —

Deep within Veylan Keep, recorded on parchment of questionable origin, was discovered the journal entry of one Marikoth Iaryarus, which reads as such:

Facing overwhelming odds, we chose the final option. As guardian of the Abyssal Grimoire, I stepped forward onto the field of battle and shattered the ruby, yelling "*Alea iacta est!*"

The crimson portal of *Daemonis Summonitus* opened, and our nightmares took the form of flesh. With a bellowing roar, the legendary Daemonis leapt through the gateway between the planes, wings darkening the sky, surrounded by an aura of unholy light. Its baleful eyes, the hollows of the abyss, gazed down upon me with malevolence. Words shaped in my mind, though its grim rictus never moved. Like hot oil melting, each utterance of the Daemonis blazed within me, demanding,

"Your soul is mine. Tell me whom to destroy."

Was it only a second that it held me so? An eternity? I cannot now say. Driven to hands and knees, it took every ounce of effort to raise a shaking finger towards the arrayed army beyond. The Daemonis stared at me, evaluating, calculating. Finally, with a smile I pray to never see again, it broke my gaze, its dark thoughts suddenly flowing out of me like water spilling from a broken dam, bursting in my chest in paroxysms of uncontrollable laughter.

The last thing I saw before I turned to flee was that raised whip, flames racing along its length to the barbed tip, rising and falling above the howling screams of the gathered army that I alone had damned to die.

SUMMON ELEMENTAL

Tempesta Summonitus

Level: 6

Area of Effect: Special

Intelligence: 62

Damage: —

Magic Points: 51

The summoned storm elemental concentrates the primeval power of the fiercest thunderstorm into an ethereal creature of lightning and thunder. This elemental will obey the archmage's every command, raining lightning bolts and electric discharges upon the caster's enemies.

SUMMON FFRED

Draconis Ffredii Summonitus

Level: 7

Area of Effect: Special

Intelligence: 74

Damage: —

Magic Points: 60

Nox Ffred Dragon is pretty busy, possibly writing the next Nox Archaist game, but if you need him he'll come hang out with your party for a while. The *Draconis Ffredii* cannot be destroyed, but if defeated, the creature is banished back to the eight-bit plane from whence it came.

SUMMON LESSER UNDEAD

Mortuus Sum. Simpuli

Level: 3

Area of Effect: Special

Intelligence: 26

Damage: —

Magic Points: 17

In a testament to the power of arcane experimentation, it was discovered that a combination of spit and a pinch of bone dust, rolled into a ball, kissed with a breath of air, and tossed onto the ground with an incantation could create un-life. This spell is guaranteed to produce several undead creatures who will fight for the caster until defeated. For those brave enough to sample the menu at Granny Yaga's Hut in the Tracts of Yrsweld, the waiters are rumored to be summoned undead.

SUMMON MINOR DEMON

Level: 5

Intelligence: 50

Magic Points: 42

Lemuris Summonitus

Area of Effect: Special

Damage: —

The *lemuris*, or minor demon, can normally be found groveling at the feet of a demon lord, running errands and delivering tortured souls. For those archmages with the power and courage, these minor demons may also be summoned to our own plane, and will serve until destroyed or dismissed. Beware their spite and malice: one misspoken word or smudged pentacle will spell ruin and damnation for the unfortunate mage.



ELYSSA TORRENCE



COMBAT

MOVING SILENTLY DOWN THE CORRIDOR, you jump nimbly over a pile of rubble. Brushing away a lock of stray hair, you gaze down the corridor, listening for the slightest noise. How dare they call you a simple thief, or worse, a mere assassin. You are no more of a killer than the rest of them. They skulk from dungeon to dungeon, slaying creatures and looting treasure chests. Every one of them has more blood on their hands than you.

“We’re all thieves,” you mutter.

“Quiet up there,” the fighter whispers.

“You be quiet you big clanking hulk,” you hiss. “With all your armor, the goblins will think an army of cooks is invading.”

“Silence you fools!” the mage says, lifting his staff. The light from its tip reflects off of pools of stagnant water.

A troop of goblin warriors marches out of a side passage, laughing and jabbering with each other. Everyone stops, frozen in surprise. Then, with a shout, the fighter raises his axe and charges into the middle of the goblins, cleaving left and right.

The mage shouts “*Arundinis Flamma*” and raises his staff. A flaming arrow streaks out, catching a hapless goblin in the chest.

“Show-offs,” you mutter.

Sliding around to the back of the goblins, you suddenly leap into the fray. Your two bronze daggers bite into the back of a brutish goblin, wounding him critically. You may not be the biggest or smartest, but you’re certainly the deadliest.

QUICK COMBAT


There are two combat modes in Nox Archaist: Quick Combat and Tactical Combat. When you encounter a hostile group of creatures, the game will show you the battlefield with the creature name at the top. At the bottom you'll see a question asking whether you wish to engage in <Q>uick or <T>actical Combat.

In Quick Combat, you'll see a blow-by-blow automated battle with the bad guys at the top and your party at the bottom. You can track your progress by watching your party's health and magic bars as well as the narrative.

Quick Combat is primarily useful when your high-level party runs into a low-level mob and you'd rather spend your time exploring or fighting more worthy opponents. For tough foes, the game will advise you against quick combat, yet still leave the choice up to you. When fighting big bosses, Quick Combat is not available and you will directly enter Tactical Combat.

In Quick Combat, your party is controlled by a full 8 bits of artificial intelligence. The characters are organized into two groups. The first three characters will move up adjacent to the enemy and attack with their currently-readied weapon. The rear group will stay back and cast spells against the enemy. If someone in the rear runs out of magic, they will attack with a ranged weapon if they have one readied. If one of the front three dies, the next character moves up and attacks with their currently-readied weapon. There's no healing or defensive spell casting and characters won't change weapons.

When the battle is finished you'll receive the same experience, skill increases, and treasure as if you had fought the full tactical battle.

 **Tip:** Nox Ffred strongly recommends against Quick Combat if your party is small or low level. There is no way to stop Quick Combat; once you've chosen, you're in a fight to the death.

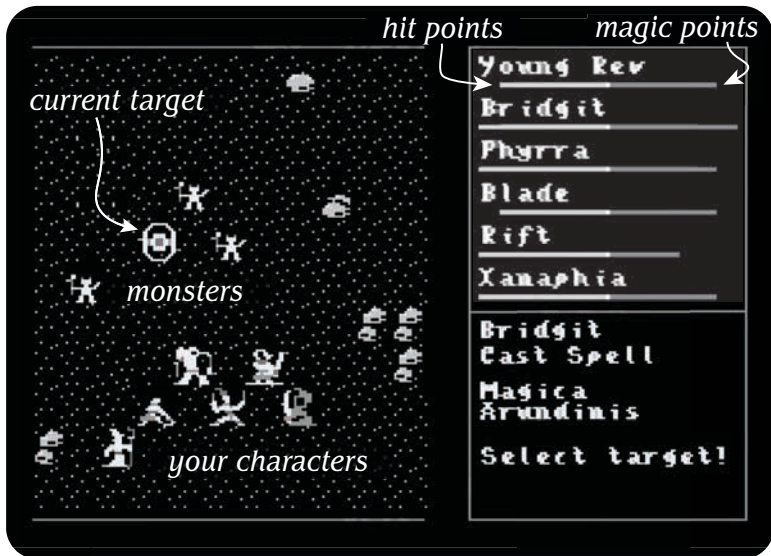
TACTICAL COMBAT

The user interface for Tactical Combat is shown in the screenshot below. The left side of the screen shows the battlefield. Your characters start near the bottom while the monsters start near the top. The top-right corner shows the current hit points (HP) and magic points (MP) for your characters. The HP and MP are updated in real time and are displayed relative to their maximum values. The current target of a weapon or spell is indicated by a bullseye icon.

During Tactical Combat you can perform the following actions:

Move: Use the arrow keys to move the active character.

Attack: Press <A> to have the active character initiate an attack. Use the arrow keys to choose a target within range. Press <A> or <Return> to execute the attack. This process is repeated if the character has a second weapon. See **WEAPONS** (p. 106) for a list of weapon damages and ranges.



Cast Spell: Press <C> to have the active character cast a spell, followed by the spell slot number. For offensive spells, cycle through the different targets using the arrow keys, then press <Return>. For defensive or healing spells, press <Space> or <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to select the character, then press <Return>. Note that area-of-effect spells (such as a *fireball*) can cause damage to your own party.

Pass: Press <Space> to skip actions for the active character and move on to the next character's turn.

Escape/Flee: Press <ESC> to flee from combat. Fleeing will always succeed except in close quarters such as towns or castles, or when fighting pirates or bosses. After fleeing, your party will appear back on the main map and will get from 1 to 3 free moves to bravely run away. No experience or gold is earned, while damage and character death still count. Also, in your haste you'll drop half of your gold.

Change Icon: The <=> key will change the icon for the active character. The game remembers your new icons for future battles. The icon that you use has no effect on game play.

Inventory: Press <TAB> to bring up your inventory. See **INVENTORY** (p. 36). During combat you can change weapons and shields but not other armor or spells.

Player-vs-Player: You can typically only target enemies. Press <P> to toggle player-versus-player mode and allow targeting of anyone on the battlefield. This mode is useful for settling party differences in a civilized way: with axe, sword, and *fireball*. Sometimes a good rhubarb just works out the tensions of a long adventure.

Active Character: Press <Shift> plus <1>–<6> to set that character to be active. This will skip actions from all other characters until it is canceled by pressing <Shift><0>. Monsters will still attack at their normal rate and can target ignored characters. This is sometimes useful if you want a single character to cast spells or fire a ranged weapon while waiting for the monsters to move up closer.

Combat Math: Press <Shift><8> to toggle the display of detailed combat statistics. Use the <+> and <-> keys to adjust the scroll speed; press <8> to pause or unpause.

SHIP COMBAT

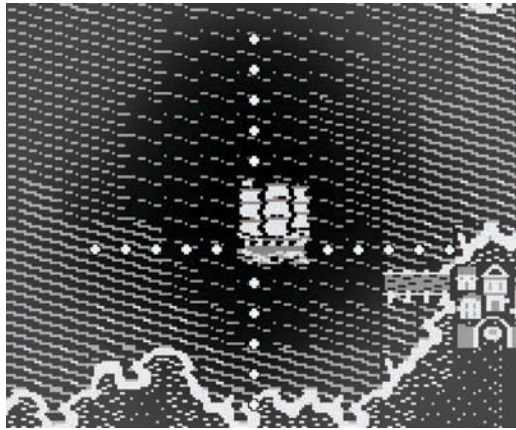
There are two different modes for ship combat: cannon fire on the high seas, and shipboard combat.

If you are sailing on the high seas in a frigate or caravel then your ship can fire its cannons at any creatures or other ships in the vicinity. Be sure your enemy is in line with your guns, then press <F> to fire, followed by the arrow key for the direction. Your guns are powerful enough that a single hit from a broadside is enough to destroy the enemy. Note, however, that using broadsides to kill an enemy gives you no experience points. When firing to the north or south from a frigate, broadsides originate from the bow, as shown below.

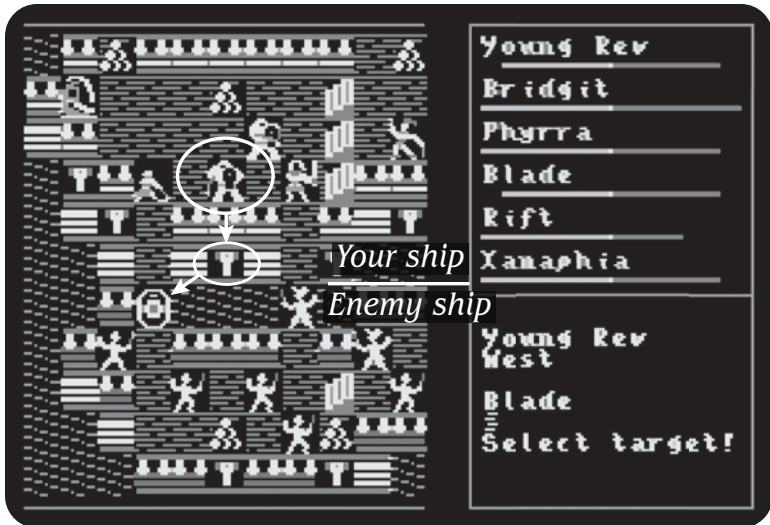
Appropriately offset your ship or you may miss and be consigned to the depths of the Siderean Sea.

If you're on a caravel or frigate and are adjacent to an enemy mob or another ship, you can engage in shipboard combat. The interface for ship

combat is identical to regular combat, except your characters are confined to only certain portions of the ship, as shown in the screenshot on the following page.



NOX ARCHAIST



Caravels and frigates both have cannons. If you are standing directly *above* one of your cannons, you can press <F> to fire it at any opponent anywhere on the battlefield. For example, in the screenshot, Young Rev (large circle) is firing the cannon in front of him (small circle) at the chosen target. Once you have fired your cannon, on your character's next turn you will need to press <F> to reload with gunpowder, and then on the following turn press <F> again to reload with new cannon shot. On your next turn you can fire again. Killing opponents using tactical cannon fire gives full experience points.

Cannon fire is only available in Tactical Combat. If you choose Quick Combat your characters will engage in good old-fashioned hand-to-hook fighting with the pirate captain. Arrrr!

You cannot engage in combat while on board a skiff or while swimming. In addition, because of your vulnerability, adjacent enemies will get free attacks on you until you reach the shoreline and disembark from the skiff or stop swimming.

TACTICS

Since Nox Archaist is a class-free system, there are some subtle differences in tactics compared to class-based systems. For example, in most games it is common practice to put the strongest characters near the front of the party, while the weaker spell-caster types stay near the back. In Nox Archaist, while traditional tactics can be effective, you may find that the tank in the front line is suddenly required to cast a healing spell. Or, your mage may run out of magic points and decide to wade into the fray, wildly swinging a staff.

Rather than class, your skills may dictate the best tactics for a battle. For example, you might decide to build a “thief/assassin” character with a high critical hit skill. You’ll want to have this character stay on the fringes of the battle, jumping in when your enemy is already engaged with your companions and then delivering a killing blow. Keep in mind that for critical hits, melee weapons do much more damage than ranged weapons.

In most battles it makes sense to concentrate the party’s attacks on one or two enemies at a time rather than spreading out attacks across multiple foes. Every enemy gets an attack each turn, and attacks are always at roughly the same strength regardless of how close the monster may be to dying. By picking off enemies one at a time you therefore reduce the number of attacks against your party.

You should also pay attention to how much damage you are dealing to your enemies. When you strike a blow and hit, if the green hit points bar for the monster doesn’t go down (or only goes down a tiny bit) then you may be in over your head. Do your best but be prepared to come back when you’re stronger or better equipped.

There are other tactics related to which monsters should be targeted first, or how to position your characters in the battle, but like any good commander, you’ll need to discover these yourself. The lands of Wynmar are not as safe as they once were, and only those with excellent strategy and great cunning will survive.

TREASURE & EXPERIENCE

Once combat is over (assuming you survive), press <ESC> to exit the battle. You'll then be presented with a list of treasure including any found items. For each item you have the option of <T>aking the item, <L>eaving it, or you can press <A> to take all items.

Since all items are shared across the party, you don't need to worry about who has that new magic sword: you'll all be able to see it in your weapons list. See **INVENTORY** (p. 36) for details.

Mobs of animals will usually drop food ("rat on a stick, anyone?"). Every battlefield (even ones with animals) may turn up a few gold coins or items dropped by less successful adventurers. More powerful foes will have more treasure and may even possess magical and wondrous items.

In Nox Archaist, experience points (XP) are pooled. During combat, you'll see the experience points for each enemy that you defeat. The XP award is based upon which character strikes the killing blow: more experience is awarded for defeating a creature that is comparable in strength, while less experience is awarded for a low-level creature. After all, there's only so much glory to be gained when fighting rodents, no matter how unusual their size.

For ships, no XP is awarded for cannon fire while sailing around. During tactical combat, you do gain XP for killing enemies using cannon fire (although no message is output to the screen).

No XP or treasure is awarded if you flee during Tactical Combat.

After the battle is over, the total XP is divided evenly among the party members. If a character has amassed enough experience points to gain a level, you will be able to pray to the gods to increase their ability scores. See **LEVEL UP!** (p. 32) for details.

BESTIARY

Just as any good explorer has a map to guide their journey, it is useful for any traveler of Vali to be aware of the friends, foes, and beasts they might encounter along the way, and whether those encounters might be met in the Isles of Wynmar, Helm's Reach, Dragonsmere, or even beyond. This Bestiary represents in short form the collected wisdom of the scholars of Nox Archaist, compiled here to help you discern the capabilities and intentions of the creatures which inhabit Queen Isa's Realm.

ARCHMAGE

The Order of Nox Archaist trains many in the ways of magic. Some of these mages rise to great might and power, able to harness the very essence of King Silus' magic crystals. These are the archmages. Most work for the good of the land and Queen Isa. Occasionally, however, some fall into darkness, using their powers to aid the denizens of the Underworld or the mysterious Cult.

BANDIT

For many years the roads of Queen Isa's Realm were safe for travelers and pilgrims. Lately, roving bandits have been causing trouble. At first they just preyed on the solitary wayfarer or a lonely farm. More recently, someone has been organizing them into specialized groups of archers, fighters, and scouts. The guard captain of Knaerwood recently issued a warning, as these bandit groups have begun attacking caravans of merchants in the surrounding woods.

BARBARIAN

The people of Wynmar consider themselves as civilized folk, looking down on the wild barbarians of Helm's Reach. Yet, when mercenaries



← NOX ARCHMAGE →

are needed to stop incursions of orcs and kobolds, the provincial governors are more than willing to hire these barbarians to fight their battles. Uncouth, smelly, and quick to anger, the barbarian is both a formidable ally and a fearsome foe.

BASILISK

The Archmage Nox Tremmel swore that he had once eaten an excellent basilisk stew. Unfortunately, he was unable to procure a second batch, as the key ingredient possesses razor sharp claws and teeth and has no desire to win culinary awards.

BAT

While exploring dungeons and caves, adventurers may encounter the occasional bat. These harmless flying rats are nothing more than an annoyance. Rumors that there exists a type of bat which likes the taste of blood and tears out throats are surely exaggerated and can be safely dismissed.

BEAR

Similar to the wolves, the bears have moved down out of the mountains and are now foraging for food in the civilized regions of Vali. If one begins to follow, don't take it personally; they're just looking for a slow-moving snack.

CENTAUR

The centaur is a proud, solitary half human-half horse. These intelligent beings once roamed all over the plains of Vali, until they were driven into the dark forests by the encroaching settlements. Now, sullen and bitter, the centaurs will defend their realm with hoof, bow, and sword.

CHIMERA

The chimera has the hind quarters of a goat, the forelegs of a lion, and the wings of a dragon. Sporting three heads and a nasty attitude, the chimera can chew through a band of adventurers and still have room for another meal. Scholars have debated for ages on the best tactics for exterminating one of these foul beasts. Long-range combatants risk the fire-breathing dragon head, while those that close to melee distance risk engaging the jaws of the lion head or being impaled by the sharp horns of the goat.

COCKATRICE

The cockatrice is a thing of nightmares. A cross between a flying lizard and an overgrown rooster, the cockatrice relies on its frightful appearance to freeze its prey. The bird-monster then swoops down and gobbles them up, using its powerful gizzard to digest them, bones and all.

CRANKY MINER

Is there any other sort? Mining is hard work! Armed with a pickaxe and a bag of fool's gold, the cranky miner views everyone with suspicion. This surly fellow considers the entire Underworld as his claim, and is swift to punish claim jumpers.

CREEPER

The creeper bears a striking resemblance to a brazier filled with flaming coals. Only the thin eye slits and tiny metal feet give it away. Rumor has it that an apprentice mage created the creeper to play a prank on his master. When the master went to douse the coals, the creeper suddenly leapt at him with bared teeth and searing flames, before scampering off into the night. Fortunately, no creeper has been seen in years and they are now believed to be extinct.



CYCLOPS

Once the butt of jokes and tall tales, when a giant one-eyed monster savaged Uharad Keep, eating all of the livestock and half the guards, people stopped laughing. Although few recall the origin of the phrase “that’s better than a sharp stick in the eye,” it would behoove the cautious traveler to heed those words and always carry a sharpened staff in case one encounters a hungry cyclops.

DEATH JESTER

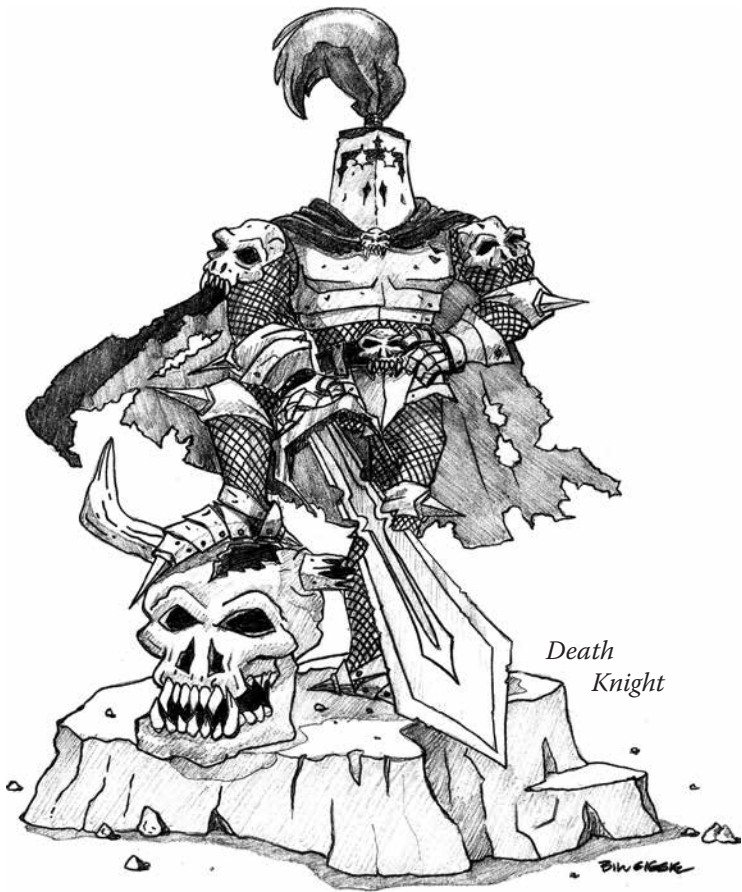
Everyone loves clowns, right? Was it a joke gone horribly wrong to turn the lovable court jester into an undead abomination? Or was it a disgruntled archmage who got tired of jesters following them around? Regardless, with his razor-sharp juggling knives, the death jester is no laughing matter. They can be found haunting the ruins of Wynmar, usually with an undead raven perched on their shoulders.

DEATH KNIGHT

The name Death Knight is whispered to frighten small children, but little is known of this fearsome warrior. His ancient armor is said to be decorated with the skulls of once-mighty warriors who challenged him to single combat, only to fall before his great blade. It is rumored that his armor is empty save the two glowing eyes beneath a plumed helm.

DEATH RAVEN

Death ravens started out as normal ravens, but have been turned into an undead bird of prey, usually by an undead lord such as the Death Knight. These malevolent creatures spy on unwary adventurers, bringing reports on the Order of Nox Archaist back to their masters.



*Death
Knight*

DEMON

Brutish and evil, demons thrive on chaos and inflicting pain, preferably using fire. They maintain a loose pecking order, with major demons picking on the weaker minor demons, who in turn subjugate the imps, all based on strength and whatever modicum of cunning they possess. The demons are usually confined to their own exterior plane, filled with lava pits, fetid steaming swamps, and boiling hot quicksand. Recently, however, minor demons and even the occasional major demon have been spotted on the outskirts of civilization, running some foul errand. It is suspected that some shortsighted archmages have twisted the spells which can open portals to the planes, summoning and enslaving these demons to their will.

DEMON LORD

In the ancient tomes of King Silus, now moldering in the palace archives, there are only hints and oblique references to the demon lords, masters of all other demons. Rumored to stand three times as tall as a human, the demon lord was able to command the very essence of fire, chaining it into a barbed whip that could lash into victims and draw out their living souls. Fortunately, through the efforts of archmages and adventurers alike, the gate to the demon lords was closed ages ago, forever barring them from returning to the plane of Vali.

DEVIL

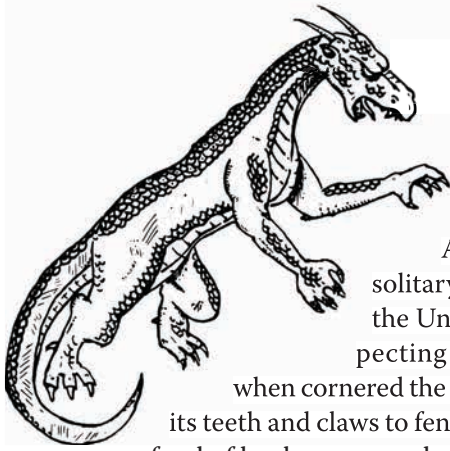
Extremely evil and highly intelligent, devils come in multiple sizes and strengths, ranging from minor devils to high devils and beyond. The devils' plane of existence is rumored to be a frozen wasteland of ever-shifting ice, lit only by the flashes of lightning from the never-ending storms. Proud and vain, the devils wage an endless war with the demon spawn.

DRAGON

The dragon is so rare that most people never encounter more than one in their lifetime. Unfortunately, that's because it's also likely the last thing they will do in their lifetime. With the body of a serpent, giant wings like a bat, and teeth like daggers, the mighty dragon is a formidable opponent.

In the Isles of Wynmar, people thought the dragon only inhabited distant, mythical lands. Recently, however, there have been credible reports of dragon sightings from the outlying islands. Most recently, a ship put into Maldac with its sails burned away. The crew gibbered to Thosha the boathouse keeper about a giant winged creature that could breathe fire. Who knows? The time civilized lands see a dragon may come sooner than we think.



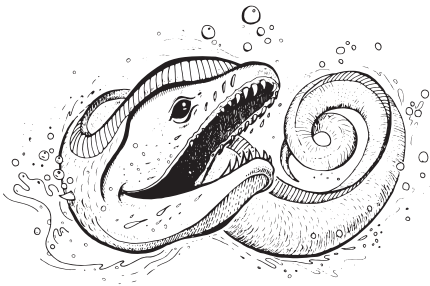


DRAKE

A smaller cousin of the dragon, the solitary drake inhabits the hidden corners of the Underworld, ready to pounce on unsuspecting adventurers. Although usually shy, when cornered the drake fights with a nasty temper, using its teeth and claws to fend off attackers. The drake is especially fond of hapless orcs and straggling adventurers.

DWARVEN OUTLAW

In the dwarven clans of Vali, if a dwarf commits a heinous crime, rather than lock them up, the dwarf is banished to the wilds and becomes a dwarven outlaw. Dwarven outlaws will typically team up with obnoxious elves, but if the pickings are slim, they'll happily backstab the elves and take all the loot for themselves.



EEL

The eel is one of the many foul creatures that the adventurer can look forward to encountering in the icy pools of the Underworld. The deadly eel usually travels in a group, called a brace. Fire is particularly effective against these foes, while panic and shrieking only serves to enrage them.

ETTIN

Ettins are brutish two-headed humanoids that tend to keep their distance from the cities and towns of humans. They are difficult to reason with, as their heads have different personalities and are known to taunt each other and perform petty acts of revenge, such as refusing to brush one another's teeth. Theobold the Courageous

I need to smash things. But Brains likes to talk. Sometimes those fighters come and bang their shields and hit me with sticks. It makes my head hurt. Eating them makes me happy. I eat you now, yes? Bye bye.



I'm Brains. He says I talk a lot. But I like to know who I eat. I don't want to eat a Nox. They give me gas real bad. I wish I knew how to read. I could teach Dummy and we could read real fast. Wait, I know. I eat you and get smart!

recorded the above encounter in his book, *The Amazing Adventures of Theobald the Courageous & the Pointy Hills of Madness*.

EVIL EYE

This creature is terrible to behold. Resembling a giant eye, with a huge mouth full of sharp teeth, the evil eye floats through dungeons looking for prey. The evil eye sends out spheres of lightning to immobilize its prey, then devours them at its leisure. Approach with caution.

FIRE FIEND

Found in the deepest Depths of Vacous, the fire fiend looks like a flaming lump of melted wax. It is unknown who summoned these lesser denizens of the exterior planes, and few have ever seen them.

FIRE LIZARD

The fire lizard is a giant, fire-breathing salamander, usually found basking in the glow of a lava river, hoping to catch an unwary kobold for a tasty flame-broiled treat.

FLOOR FUNGUS

The floor fungus is a nasty organism that infects the floor in subterranean caverns and tunnels. From a distance the fungus looks like a beautiful vein of lapis lazuli. A closer inspection reveals the truth, at which point it's too late: the victim is trapped and then slowly digested. The Big Chief used to send down kobold cleaning crews but gave up after too few of them came back.

GARGOYLE

The gargoyle is a patient creature, willing to sit on a ledge or cornice for days, before swooping down on prey to rend them with claws and teeth. The stone-hard skin makes them nearly impervious to weapons, while their strong leathery wings let them quickly flee from danger.

GHOUL

A ghoul is the re-animated remains of a dead humanoid. Bereft of free will, the ghoul seeks only to destroy other creatures and feed on their flesh. Ghouls are sometimes under the control of an evil master, but just as often can be found wandering amidst the ruins of civilization.

GIANT

Giants are a very rare but formidable foe. They are partial to mountainous regions with an abundant supply of boulders, which they like to hurl at their enemies with devastating effect. Arrows are more of an annoyance to them than a threat, but woe to the foe who gets too close and connects with the business end of their club or fist.



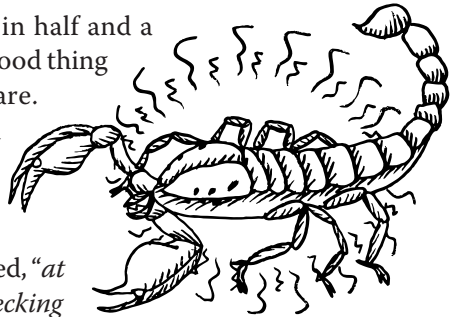
GIANT CRAB

Ask any fisherman of the Isles of Wynmar about the giant crab, and they will tell of a cousin or uncle who unwittingly pulled one of these creatures into their boat. With their huge claws, the giant crab would just as happily rip someone to pieces as make a nice meal of them.

GIANT SCORPION

With pincers that can snap a dwarf in half and a stinger that can fell a horse, the only good thing about a giant scorpion is that it's rare.

Learned scholars in their cloistered towers recommend that one fights the giant scorpion from a distance using missiles and spells. However, as the Archmage Tremmel once quipped, *"at least you don't have to worry about checking your sandals for one of these monsters."*



GNOLL

The gnoll is a humanoid creature that resembles a cross between an orc and a hyena. Similar in size and strength to an orc, the gnoll lacks the anger and grit of its humanoid cousin. Like the hyena, a pack of gnolls will circle its prey, yipping and rushing in with axe and spear, only to leap skittishly back when opposed. When fighting gnolls the best tactic is to avoid being cut out from the party; form a circle, protect each other's backs, and press the fight forward.

GNOME

Gnomes are tough, wiry humanoids, smaller than a dwarf but just as fierce in battle. The gnomes used to be allies with the dwarves, both interested in gems and gold, both mining the Underworld. However, in the great war long ago, the dwarves chose to ally themselves with King Silus and the Overworld, while the gnomes chose to stay in

the Underworld and fight alongside the orcs and kobolds. Since then, the animosity between dwarves and gnomes has only grown, to the point where each will attack the other on sight, regardless of the odds. Grumpy Gus, dwarven craftsman of Ghrodwir, even advertises special “Gnome Hooks” which he claims are the correct solution to the “infestation”.

GREAT GOBLIN

These giant humanoids rule over the hobgoblins and lesser orcs of the Underworld. The male great goblin typically arms himself with a halberd, carries a large wooden shield, and rushes into battle shouting the war cry of his clan. The female great goblin is even more ferocious, wielding two scimitars, and trampling her male counterparts in her rush into battle. Since great goblins believe that bathing is a sign of weakness, the stench alone is usually enough to fell lesser foes.

GREAT SHARK

The terror of the high seas, the great shark is a fearsome monster with razor-sharp teeth that can gobble down small boats with a snap of its jaws. If one encounters a great shark, the best bet is to set all sails and flee to a safe harbor. Even then, the beast has been known to pursue prey into the harbor in its bloodthirsty hunt for food.

GREMLIN

Resembling a ball of matted fur with wart-covered ears, the quick and wily gremlin always travels in pairs. Darting about, weaving in and out of the legs of taller creatures, their favorite tactic is to pelt opponents with rotten food that they’ve stolen from other adventurers.



HARPY

A cross between a vulture and a humanoid, the harpy has the wings of its bird ancestor and a vaguely humanoid upper torso and head. Thoroughly evil, the harpy likes nothing more than to shriek in one's ear as it glides past, followed by a sharp dagger in the back.

HOBGOBLIN

The hobgoblin is a runtier, uglier cousin of the orc. Small in size, with pointy ears and a warty nose, the hobgoblin likes to find creatures even weaker than itself and torment them. Unless there are a great many of them, the hobgoblin will be no match for a well-armed party.

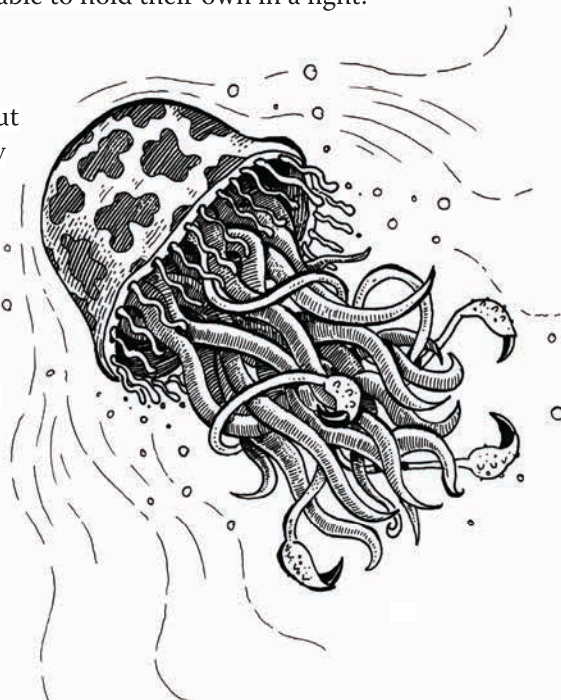


HOOLIGAN

Hooligans and rabble rousers like to hang out near towns and castles, causing trouble late at night, tipping over cows and attacking defenseless peasants. Unlike their weaker cousins the rabble rousers, the hooligans are a tough lot, able to hold their own in a fight.

JELLYFISH

The placid jellyfish bobs about in the ocean, waiting for prey to come close before stinging it into submission. The best defense against a swarm of these creatures is to swim away as quickly as possible, or to attack from a distance with bow and spell. With no brain or heart, there's no pleading for mercy with these creatures.



KOBOLD

The kobold was once considered to be the lowliest member of the Underworld, subservient to hobgoblins and orcs. But a strict regimen of exercise and a low-carb diet, enforced by their new leader, the Big Chief, has turned the kobolds into a veritable fighting machine. Armed with shock troops, legions of archers, and well-trained lieutenants, the Big Chief is ready to reclaim his rightful place in the Underworld.

KRAKEN

In ages past, the mighty Kraken was the bane of sailors and ships, terrorizing all who sailed the Siderean Sea. Each year scores of ships would disappear without a trace. The few survivors told of giant tentacles rising out of the depths, crushing their ships and devouring the crew. Finally, King Silus sent a great fleet to destroy the beast, led by his son Prince Wulfen and the most powerful archmages in the land. The mages were able to combine their arcane powers and drive the Kraken down into the deepest ocean trench, burying it under a cataclysm of rocks and debris.

No one truly knows whether the Kraken was indeed destroyed, as the archmages insist, or is only slumbering deep in the Underworld, awaiting a chance to break free and once again wreak havoc upon the world.

MAD MUSHROOM

In the cold and dank caverns beneath the surface, lit only by flickering torchlight, it can be hard to tell friend from foe. Everyone agrees however, that the mad mushroom is not a friend. Masquerading as a typical giant mushroom, the mad mushroom waits for prey to walk by, and then injects its victim with green spores. Within minutes, what was once a sentient creature is now just another voracious mad mushroom.

MARAUDER

Originally hired as mercenaries by the Order of Nox Archaist, these warriors of the central plains of Wynmar have since gone rogue, sacking villages and carrying off men, women, and children. The Cult has had some success in curbing the worst excesses of the marauders. Their ability to help where the Order has not is yet another reason why many people have turned away from the Order.

MUMMY

Swathed in moldering bandages, the mummy roams the corridors in crypts and ruins, seeking out living beings in a mindless attempt to drag them back to its sarcophagus. The mummy's only fear is flame, and it will immediately attempt to crush the life out of anyone foolish enough to light a torch in its presence.

Theobold the Courageous recorded a stratagem for dealing with these undead in his book, *The Even More Amazing Adventures of Theobold the Courageous and the Tomb of Dusty Despair*:

I was unafraid as the wrapped mummy approached, for I knew the weakness of these dusty denizens of darkness! A mummy's only fear is flame. I liberally poured oil upon the torch of my stalwart servant, Percy, and directed him to drive the blazing fire towards it! Unfortunately, even as I pushed him forward, Percy was not as brave as I. His shaking, oil-slicked hands dropped the light upon the gritty ground, allowing the mummy to advance with arms arrayed. Alas, poor Percy.

NIGHTMARE

The nightmare is a foul-tempered beast from the exterior plane of demons. With red eyes, midnight-blue skin, flaming nostrils, and fire-covered hooves, the nightmare roams the demon plane, seeking for a rift to the central planes where it can wreak havoc and terror.



NOVICE CULTIST

Members of the Order of Nox Archaist view the Cult as a perversion of everything the Order stands for. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the initiation rites of a novice cultist. Indoctrinated from a young age, the novice cultist is given two items: a heavy hide-bound book and a sharp wavy blade. The book, similar in size to the Nox Archaist Magus Tome, is filled with garbled and warped translations of spells. What little true knowledge they may gain from the book is soon lost as the cultists are ritually taught to beat their heads into submission upon the stiff covers. The dagger, similar in weight to the swords of the Order, is primarily used to intimidate the weaker Cult members. Nevertheless, because of their knowledge of the darker arcane arts, one should never underestimate the novice cultist.

OBNOXIOUS ELF

There is something not quite right about the obnoxious elves. Perhaps it's the fact that they seem to enjoy the company of dwarven outlaws. Or their fastidiousness with keeping a clean table. Or perhaps it's the annoyingly green hat and pointy shoes. Or the way they pop up out of nowhere and hurl insults. Regardless, they don't like adventurers, and will cheerfully throttle one to get a bit of coin or a shiny button.

OGRE

Ogres are an ornery lot. Orc tribes commonly recruit ogres as allies. Their ill temper can result in a few orcs meeting an untimely demise but orc chieftains consider that an acceptable loss for the firepower an ogre provides. Ogres have limited resistance to spell attacks. Don't bother with arrows, however, as they tend to bounce right off the ogre's thick skull.



ORC

The orc tribes are too numerous to count. Originally held in check by the Order of Nox Archaist and the magic crystals, lately, incursions of orcs have grown more frequent. These orc tribes are typically organized into guards (dumb and mean), scouts (smart, wiry, and fast), and shamans. The shamans, with their primitive beads and necklaces of rat skulls, can actually tap into the magical energy of the Underworld and cast minor spells. Attempts have been made to drive the orcs back into the mountains and underground, but all of these have failed and have served only to enrage and embolden the tribes.

PEGASUS

These proud winged steeds once served as messengers of the kingdom, carrying documents and important personages. For unknown reasons, they renounced their allegiance several generations ago and went into the Underworld. Now, stunted and warped, they seek to destroy anyone from the Overworld, wanting only to deny to others what they once enjoyed: the freedom of the open plains and sky.

PHANTOM

Less powerful than a wisp, the phantom is an insubstantial undead formed from the memories of a fallen warrior. Although non-corporeal, the phantom is still a deadly opponent, using its memories of old battles to conjure a sword out of thin air and strike at its enemy.

PHOENIX

The elusive phoenix lives deep in the Underworld, preening and tending to its plumage. The phoenix believes in the circle of life, and that only through the transformation from death to rebirth is there any hope of improvement. It is thus the duty of every phoenix to bring about this transformation in every living creature that it encounters. Attempts to reason with the phoenix and point out that most creatures are not immediately reborn once they are consumed in flames have so far met with little success.



PIRATE

On land one might be able to hoist a tankard and have a civilized conversation with the pirates in Freebooter's Cove. But on the Siderean Sea, pirates range far and wide, always on the lookout for passing ships to plunder. A wise traveler will have cannons at the ready, but be wary, for pirates may fire back!

RABBLE ROUSER

Unlike their bigger cousins the hooligans, most adventurers have little to fear from the rabble rouser. Their greatest delight is to torment the weak and helpless, while their greatest fear is to be humiliated by someone more powerful than themselves.

RABID DOG

Scholars debate whether the packs of rabid dogs that roam the plains of Vali are wolves that have become more tame, or pets gone feral. It doesn't matter much, because once they have their target's scent, these four-legged killers will never give up the chase.

RAT

Just like the bat, the rat is harmless if found alone. The dwarf Thrawabela of Ghrodwir recalls a time while exploring an ancient mine when she came across a horde of rats feasting on a dead orc. All she could remember was their red gleaming eyes and the squeaking and chattering as she fought her way clear with her pickaxe.

SATYR

The satyr is an almost mythical half-human-half-goat creature with a mane, a beast-like face, and hooves. Once common in the woods of Vali, the satyrs were hunted nearly to extinction by members of the Cult, who claimed that the beasts were an unnatural abomination. Driven underground, the satyrs have an intense hatred for all surface dwellers and will attack on sight.

SEA SERPENT

The sea serpent prowls the seas, hunting for jellyfish, eels, and sharks. When food is scarce, the sea serpent has been known to attack boats and even ships. The best defense against these monsters is to sail as fast as possible, perhaps using a rain squall for cover.

SHADE

Sometimes confused with a phantom, the shade is an undead creature formed from a lost soul. As such, the shade can sometimes dimly remember their former life, and seeks to drain the life from others so they can share the same fate.

SHADOW

The powerful shadow flits through the Depths of Vacous, lurking just outside of the torchlight. Then, when a creature walks by of the right shape and size, the shadow smoothly glides alongside for a while, until it suddenly envelopes its victim, cloaking it in the icy chill of death. The shadow fears only bright light and fire spells.

SHAPESHIFTER

In its natural state, the shapeshifter appears as a humanoid with blue pallid skin, orange hair, and eyes like gray orbs. More commonly, the shapeshifter appears as someone the victim knows and trusts, at least until the shapeshifter suddenly strikes. In battle, the shapeshifter typically wields a magic staff that can fire balls of energy.



SKELETON

Created by master wizards, skeletons are the undead remains of fallen warriors. Their reanimated bones haunt the halls of ancient castles and underground crypts. Only a fool ventures into the deep without a torch, lest they find themselves lost in the darkness and overrun by mindless hordes of skeletons.

SKELETON LORD

The skeleton lord is the undisputed master of the skeleton army. Possessing an evil intelligence behind glowing yellow eyes, and bearing a huge flaming sword, the skeleton lord leads its minions into battle on an undead horse.

SPIDER

The townspeople of Alef's Knoll scoffed when the Widow Myrtle claimed that her prized cow Betsy Loo had been carried off in the night by a giant eight-legged monster with green glowing eyes.

Undaunted, Myrtle headed off into the forest armed only with a cudgel and pitchfork. A week later, no one was laughing when the widow stomped into the town square dragging the dead body of a giant spider.

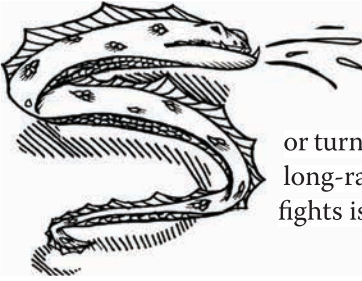
Now, reports have come in from all over the kingdom of giant spiders lurking in caves, coming out at night to catch animals and people in dark sticky webs and dragging them back for a tasty snack.

NICK GAZZARARI



SPITTING COBRA

The spitting cobra is the bane of travelers across the lands. Extremely aggressive, the cobra uses its uncanny sense of smell to pursue its prey indefinitely. The only recourse when one encounters a spitting cobra is to either cut off the pursuit with a natural obstacle such as a river or mountain, hide in the forest or hills, or turn and fight to the death. Unfortunately, with its long-range spit of deadly venom, the winner of these fights is almost always the spitting cobra.



SQUID

Jetting through the seas with bursts of water, the squid subsists on a diet of jellyfish, eels, and the occasional fishing boat. Sailors should keep a sharp lookout for the largest of these creatures, as they have been known to tip boats over and swallow people whole.

SWAMP DWELLER

Long ago, the swamp dwellers were a peaceful, fun-loving band who inhabited the fetid swamps west of the town of Maldac. Sadly, one day, the local Margrave's castle burned down, fell over, and then sank into the swamp, completely ruining their homeland.

Since then, the swamp dwellers have had an intense hatred for all humanoids. The swamp dweller's favorite pastime is to lie in wait by the swamp's edge, just below the putrid surface, and then burst upwards with a screech. Using its jet-black claws and barbed teeth, the horror will then drag its victim below the surface.



TROLL

The troll is covered in a green scaly hide that is nearly impervious to weapons. With arms hanging down to the ground and stupid piggish eyes, the troll is almost comical in its ungainly appearance. In fact, when he first laid eyes on the troll of Fenbrooke Ruins, Sir Geoffrey Foulbottom doubled over in a fit of laughing. His companions began laughing as well, only to stop in horror as the troll proceeded to rip the knight's arms out and wave them about. Hours later, with half of their party dead or wounded, the troll was finally brought down by a *fireball*.

UNDEAD WARRIOR

Among the undead, the undead warrior is second only to the Death Knight in power. The undead warrior starts its undeath as a ghoul formed from the body of an evil knight. If the ghoulish knight can survive through the ages, it may become powerful enough to be granted a form of consciousness and transformed into an undead warrior. The undead warrior usually allies itself with an evil archmage, as both can then draw on the power and minions of the other.



VAMPIRE

The vampire is one of the most powerful of the undead. Able to cast terrible spells, the vampire can also suck the life force from a person with its icy fangs. The vampire expert Baron von Caedis recommended that a group wishing to kill a vampire should stick close together, making sure to never let anyone stray far from the group lest they be picked off one-by-one. Sadly, the Baron disappeared on a moonlit night after attempting to bite the mayor's daughter on the neck.

VILLAGER, HAPLESS

The hapless villager can be found in the villages of Wynmar, eking out a living through muck farming. The other villagers know to keep their distance, as any calamity (such as a goblin attack or meteor strike) is bound to befall the hapless villager first. Despite all this, the hapless villager is quite cheerful. Gifts of food, ale, and gold are highly appreciated, even though the goods will most likely be misplaced before the hapless villager can make it home.

WARLOCTOPUS

At first glance one might mistake the warloctopus for a humanoid. In fact, the Archmage Nox Tremmel did just that, not realizing his near-fatal mistake until the creature pulled down its hood. Where its head should have been was instead a ghastly purple octopus, with waving tentacles and slobbering beak. Behind those unblinking eyes lies an alien intelligence able to tap directly into the magical currents of the Underworld and unleash a torrent of lightning bolts.



WHOOPING CAMEL

Picture the foulest, most disagreeable beast in the world. Now add a misshapen lump on its back, dirty and matted yellow hair, and crooked broken teeth. The irritating whooping sound they make is enough to drive you mad. Did anyone mention the ability to spew mucus-filled saliva all over the battlefield? Yet in the desert they are the only form of transportation available to merchant caravans.

WISP

Due to its ethereal appearance, most travelers never notice the ghostly form of the wisp as it trails along in their wake, sizing up the weakest member of the party. Little else is known, save that their power is said to rival that of many mages of the Order.

WITCH

On the outskirts of every village lives the village witch who takes care of the sick and afflicted, making potions and training youths in the ways of the Order. But, there are other witches, cast out from society, who shun the Order and traffic with darker forces. In *The Valiant Ventures of Theobold the Courageous and the Magnificent Mirror of Me*, Theobold describes the following encounter:

I heard tell of a Witch of the Wood, an irresistible beauty known as “The Belle of Baglistock”. She was hidden in the darkest forest, but I knew where others failed, I could draw her forth, because what maiden could resist my own fair form? The townsfolk, ever helpful, pointed to the forest. It took only a few days of wandering, waxing my mustache, and posing suggestively in glades of mottled moonlight for her to find me.

She glimmered beneath the stars; her enchanted beauty almost as magnificent as mine! I cannot lie, my heart leapt. If only we had met before she signed the dark pact, what joy could’ve been ours? I held her gaze for a timeless moment as our lips touched. Then, as I knew they must, her soft eyes melted to putrescent purple ponds; her feathery fingertips, so recently brushing my cheek, transformed to carrion claws. The crone cackled and I drew my sharp-edged duty, comforting her with the last words she would ever hear... “My kiss is always worth dying for.”



WOLF

Once found only on the fringes of Wynmar, wolves have been seen in greater numbers near cities and towns, sometimes in the company of packs of rabid dogs. The wolf is a keen hunter, able to pick up a cold trail or spy prey across long distances. An even larger variety is known as a great wolf, and stands as tall as a full-grown person.

WRAITH

Rumored to be impervious to normal weapons, the wraith is an insubstantial being that feeds off of fear. Do not let the wraith approach too closely, as its icy touch can freeze the soul of even the most hardened warrior.

ZOMBIE

At first glance, the zombie resembles a ghoul. However, the dim glow in the zombie's eyes betrays its origin. Behind those eyes lurks the remnants of a shattered soul, neither completely alive nor dead. The zombie's sole purpose is to consume the living, either by eating their flesh or transforming them into another zombie.

Ayre, graveyard caretaker of Knaerwood, wisely points out that one should watch for the warning symptoms of undead transformation in friends and companions that have been wounded by zombies. If one notices a shambling gait, a vacant look, muttering about brains, or limbs falling off, seek medical help immediately!





APPENDIX

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Experience Points	Level	Min HP	Max HP
0	1	50	50
100	2	56	59
300	3	63	71
800	4	71	86
2000	5	81	104
7000	6	93	127
12000	7	108	155
17000	8	113	166
23000	9	119	177
32000	10	125	190

Min HP: This is for characters that only have a strength of 8.

Max HP: This is for characters that put all of their ability increases into strength.

WEAPONS

Level	Name	Range	STR/WT	DEX	INT	Max Dmg
1	Hunting Knife	—	1	—	—	23
	Staff*	2	1	—	—	30
	Shortsword	—	3	—	—	36
	Shortbow	5	3	8	—	29
2	Copper Dirk	—	1	14	—	26
	Copper Dagger	—	1	20	—	30
	Light Mace	—	4	—	—	40
	Rapier	—	6	—	—	45
	Battleaxe*	2	10	—	—	54
	Flatbow	6	4	14	—	36
3	Throwing Knife	3	1	20	—	36
	Bronze Dirk	—	1	26	—	34
	Bronze Dagger	—	1	32	—	38
	Heavy Mace	—	7	—	—	50
	Broadsword	—	9	—	—	56
	War Hammer*	2	16	—	—	66
	Recurve Bow	7	6	20	—	44
	Throwing Dagger	4	1	32	—	44
4	Magic Staff	15	3	—	32	49
	Iron Dirk	—	1	38	—	43
	Iron Dagger	—	1	44	—	48
	Light Flail	—	11	—	—	63
	Claymore	—	13	—	—	71
	Greataxe*	2	22	—	—	84
	Long Bow	15	7	26	—	52
5	Throwing Star	5	1	44	—	52
	Poison Staff	15	3	—	44	60
	Steel Dirk	—	1	50	—	54
	Steel Dagger	—	1	56	—	60
	Heavy Flail	—	15	—	—	81
	Scimitar	—	16	—	—	91
6	Great Sword*	2	28	—	—	108
	Crossbow	15	9	32	—	65
	Dark Throwing Star	6	1	56	—	65
	Fire Staff	15	3	—	56	75
	Jeweled Dirk	—	1	62	—	67
	Jeweled Dagger	—	1	68	—	75
6	Morning Star	—	18	—	—	104
	Longsword	—	20	—	—	117
	Halberd*	2	34	—	—	141
	Triple Crossbow	15	11	38	—	83
	Triple Throwing Star	6	1	68	—	83
	Ice Staff	15	3	—	68	97

APPENDIX

Level	Name	Range	STR/WT	DEX	INT	Max Dmg
7	Frost Dagger	—	1	80	—	95
	Frost Sword	—	24	—	—	153
	Frost Greataxe*	2	40	—	—	186
	Frost Triple Crossbow	15	13	44	—	105
	Frost Throwing Star	6	1	80	—	105
	Frost Staff	15	3	—	80	124
8	Storm Dagger	—	1	92	—	105
	Storm Sword	—	27	—	—	168
	Storm Greataxe*	2	46	—	—	204
	Storm Triple Crossbow	15	15	50	—	115
	Storm Throwing Star	6	1	92	—	115
	Storm Staff	15	3	—	92	136
9	Drake Dagger	—	1	104	—	115
	Drake Sword	—	31	—	—	184
	Drake Greataxe*	2	52	—	—	223
	Drake Triple Crossbow	15	16	56	—	123
	Drake Throwing Star	6	1	104	—	123
	Drake Staff	15	3	—	104	147
10	Dragon Dagger	—	1	116	—	126
	Dragon Sword	—	34	—	—	200
	Dragon Greataxe*	2	58	—	—	242
	Dragon Triple Crossbow	15	18	62	—	134
	Dragon Throwing Star	6	1	116	—	134
	Dragon Staff	15	3	—	116	160

* Two-handed melee weapons; these can reach foes up to 2 tiles away.

Level: The weapon level depends upon the required strength, dexterity, or intelligence. This roughly corresponds to your character level if you put all of your level increases into a single ability.

Range: The weapon range measured in tiles. A range of 15 tiles spans the entire battlefield. Ranged weapons use the range skill; all other weapons use melee skill.

STR/WT: The minimum required strength for this weapon; also the item's weight. Note that all readied items count towards your weight limit.

DEX, INT: The minimum required dexterity or intelligence.

Max Dmg: The maximum damage, including the base weapon damage, skill bonus (melee or ranged), and strength bonus (for melee only). Maximum damage does not include critical hit damage, which can increase damage by double or more. After you ready a weapon you can see your maximum damage in your character sheet. See **STATS** (p. 28).

ARMOR

Level	Description	STR	Armor Rating
1	Cloth Gloves	1	4
	Cloth Helm	1	4
	Cloth Boots	1	4
	Cloth Robes	1	12
	Wooden Shield	1	14
2	Leather Gloves	2	6
	Leather Helm	2	6
	Leather Boots	2	6
	Padded Robes	1	13
	Leather Cuirass	4	15
	Buckler	3	17
	Mage Necklace +2, INT 14*	0	8
Thief Necklace +2, DEX 14*	0	10	
3	Brigandine Gloves	3	7
	Brigandine Helm	3	7
	Brigandine Boots	3	7
	Brigandine Vest	7	18
	Small Heater Shield	7	22
	Mage Cloak +3, INT 26*	1	17
	Thief Cloak +3, DEX 26*	1	21
4	Chain Gauntlets	4	8
	Chainmail Coif	4	9
	Chainmail Boots	4	9
	Chainmail Hauberk	9	23
	Large Heater Shield	9	27
5	Scale Gauntlets	5	9
	Scale Helm	5	11
	Scale Boots	5	11
	Scale Breastplate	12	28
	Small Tower Shield	12	35
6	Plate Gauntlets	6	11
	Plate Helm	6	14
	Plate Sabaton	6	14
	Breastplate	14	35
	Large Tower Shield	14	43

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Level	Description	STR	Armor Rating
	Frost Gauntlets	8	14
	Frost Helm	8	17
7	Frost Sabaton	8	17
	Frost Breastplate	17	44
	Frost Shield	17	53
	Storm Gauntlets	9	15
	Storm Helm	9	19
8	Storm Sabaton	9	19
	Storm Breastplate	19	47
	Storm Shield	19	56
	Drake Gauntlets	10	17
	Drake Helm	10	20
9	Drake Sabaton	10	20
	Drake Breastplate	21	51
	Drake Shield	21	59
	Dragon Gauntlets	11	18
	Dragon Helm	11	22
10	Dragon Sabaton	11	22
	Dragon Breastplate	24	55
	Dragon Shield	24	63

Level: The armor level roughly corresponds to the character level when you should expect to be able to acquire and use that armor, assuming you put all of your level ability increases into strength.

STR: The minimum strength necessary to ready a piece of armor; also the item's weight. All readied items count towards your weight limit.

Armor Rating: The defensive value for the piece of armor. You can see your total armor rating in your character sheet. In combat, melee and range weapon damage against you is reduced by this amount, while spell damage is reduced by 25% of this amount.

*Rumors persist of magic necklaces and cloaks that bestow better protection. If true, they would require an additional 12 points of intelligence or dexterity for each level increase.

SPELLS

Level	Spell	INT	MP	Dmg	Area of Effect
	Illuminate	8	1	—	Medium (n/c)
1	Lesser Heal	8	2	—	One character
	Magic Missile	8	3	17	One enemy
	Engage Enemy	14	6	—	Party
2	Fire Arrow	14	6	34	One enemy
	Fireball	14	10	48	Small
	Boulder Smite	26	10	47	One enemy
	Boulder Storm	26	16	26	All enemies
3	Fireball+1	26	15	47	Medium
	Mage Armor	26	3	—	Spell caster
	Summon Lesser Undead	26	10	—	Special
	Blade Smite	38	14	63	One enemy
	Blade Storm	38	21	30	All enemies
4	Fireball+2	38	21	42	Large
	Greater Heal	38	4	—	One character
	Greater Illuminate	38	4	—	Large (n/c)
	Quick Exit	38	4	—	Party (n/c)
	Divine Heal	50	17	—	Party
	Ed's Axe of Anguish	50	25	40	All enemies
5	Shock Enemy	50	17	87	One enemy
	Shock Storm	50	25	125	Small
	Summon Minor Demon	50	17	—	Special
	Lightning Blast	62	20	120	One enemy
	Resurrect	62	51	—	One character
6	Sally Forth (Wizard Portal)	62	?	—	Party (n/c)
	Shock Storm+1	62	30	120	Medium
	Summon Elemental	62	20	—	Special

← APPENDIX →

Level	Spell	INT	MP	Dmg	Area of Effect
7	Infernal Blast	74	23	167	One enemy
	Magical Reckoning	74	8	—	Party (n/c)
	Shock Storm+2	74	34	107	Large
	Summon Ffred	74	23	—	Special
8	Chain Lightning	86	39	188	Medium
	Lightning Blast+1	86	26	188	One enemy
	Summon Demon Lord	?	?	—	Special
9	Chain Lightning+1	98	43	149	Large
	Cowmageddon	?	?	?	Special
	Lightning Blast+2	98	29	255	One enemy
	Nox Necrosis	?	?	?	One enemy
10	Nox Vortex	?	?	?	Cone

Level: The spell level groups spells based upon their required intelligence. The spell level roughly corresponds to the character level when you should expect to be able to acquire and use that spell, assuming you put all of your level ability increases into intelligence.

INT: The minimum intelligence necessary to understand and cast the spell.

MP: The number of magic points required to cast the spell.

Dmg: The base amount of damage per enemy. This value will be reduced by both magic resistance and 25% of the total armor rating for the enemy.

?: This indicates that the spell is so rare that the value is unknown.

Area of Effect: The area that is affected by a spell: n/c: non-combat; Small: 3×3 tiles; Medium: 5×5 tiles; Large: 7×7 tiles. Spells with an area of effect will never damage the spellcaster but can damage both your enemies and friends.

QUICK REFERENCE

GENERAL & COMBAT

↑ ↓ ← → movement
SPACE pass turn
A attack
C cast spell
F fire cannon (ships only)
V volume/sound toggle
= toggle character icon
TAB display character roster
TAB+TAB display inventory

ADVENTURING

B board transport or mount
D dig (ruins only)
G get current location
H hide and camp
I ignite torch
J jump with your horse
L look
N new character order
O open or operate object
Q quick save game
S search
T talk to NPC
W wait for a number of hours
X exit transport or mount
Y yell, go fast on horse/mount
/ quest log
? keyboard shortcuts

COMBAT

P player-vs-player toggle
SHIFT+1-6 set active character
SHIFT+0 resume combat order
SHIFT+8 toggle combat math
+/- fast/slow scroll speed
8 pause text scroll
ESC flee from battle; exit combat

INVENTORY & SHOPPING

TAB switch to next menu
1-7 access menus by hotkey
↑ ↓ scroll through items
← → previous/next page
SPACE next character
SHIFT+1-6 choose character
RETURN ready/unready item
I information on item
U use an item
D discard item
B switch to buy menu (shop)
S switch to sell menu (shop)
RETURN buy or sell item (shop)
ESC exit inventory/shop

NPC DIALOG

Keywords **NAME**, **JOB**, **JOIN**
TAB toggle voice mode
ESC exit conversation

NOX ARCHAIST APPLICATION

Aspect Ratio: <Ctrl><Shift><A> followed by:

- <1>: 1:1 (Square)
- <2>: 1.33:1 (4:3)
- <3>: 1.46:1 (Default)
- <4>: 1.62:1 (Golden ratio)
- <5>: 1.78:1 (16:9)

Graphics Mode: <Ctrl><Shift><G> followed by:

- <1>: Color Dot Matrix
- <2>: Color Voxel Cube
- <3>: Color Raster (Default)
- <4>: Mono Dot Matrix
- <5>: Mono Voxel Cube
- <6>: Mono Raster

Interlace: <Ctrl><Shift><I> followed by <0>–<9>

Reboot: <Ctrl><Shift><Backspace> or <Delete>

Screenshot: <Ctrl><Shift><\\>.

Location: [Home]/microM8/MyScreenshots

Tint Mode: <Ctrl><Shift><T> followed by <1>–<5>:

- <1>: Color (no tint)
- <2>: Black and White
- <3>: Green Screen
- <4>: Amber Screen

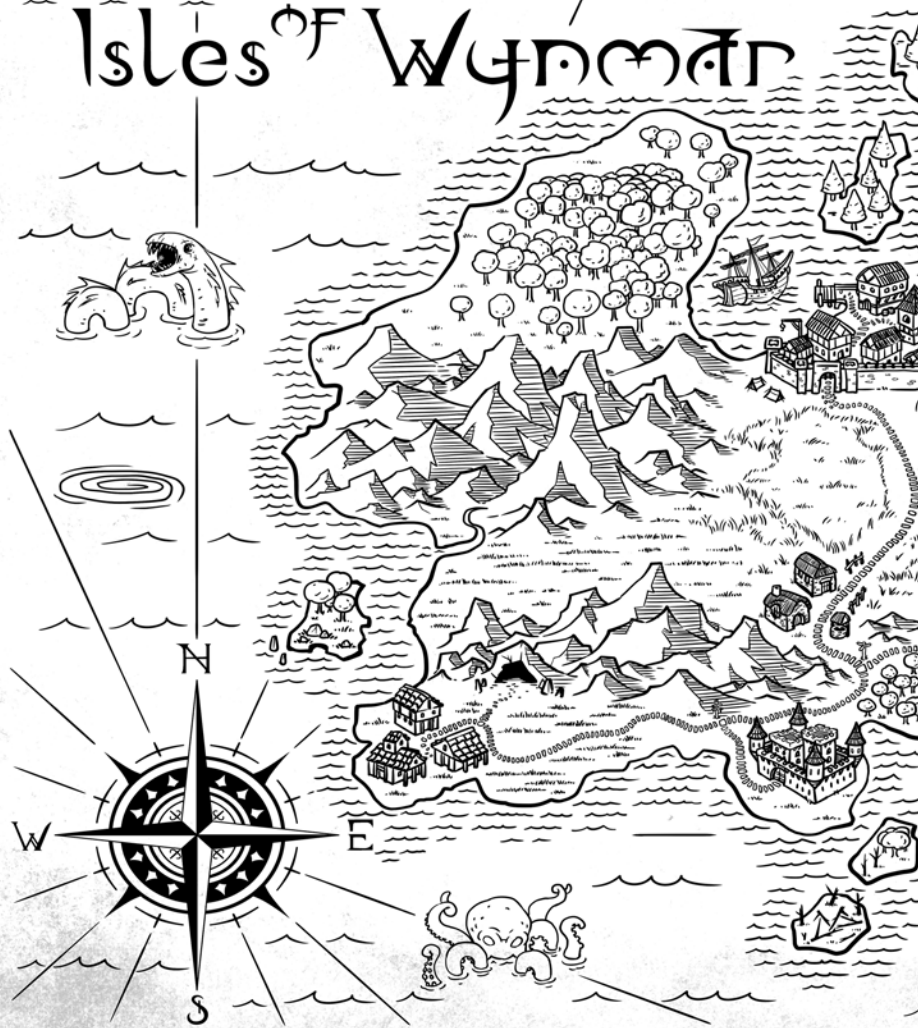
Warp CPU: <Ctrl><Shift><W> followed by <1>–<6>:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| <1>: 25% | <4>: 200% |
| <2>: 50% | <5>: 400% |
| <3>: 100% | <6>: 800% |

More controls are available from the emulator menu, which you can access by moving your mouse to the upper left corner of the window.



Isles of Wymmar





HC SVNT
DRACONES

DESIGN NOTES

The primary goal of Nox Archaist was to create a fun game that computer role-playing games (CRPG) enthusiasts would enjoy playing. The 6502 Workshop team wanted to develop a modern version of the tile-based CRPG genre, while exploring how gameplay might have advanced if large-scale development had continued on the Apple II platform after the 1980s.

A key design decision was the 128k RAM requirement. Many of us played our first games on the Apple II+, and while we were reluctant to create a game that doesn't run on that machine, it was a necessary compromise if we wanted to explore how games would likely have evolved. After the 1980s, we think most software would have eventually required a 128k Apple IIe, IIc, or IIGs and the additional memory was a key factor that allowed us to push the frontier forward on gameplay technology.

In the early stages of the project we made several design decisions which we weren't sure were actually possible. In games from back in the day, an 11×11 tile grid was typically used, which left room on the screen for the character roster and a scrolling text window. In our case, we went for a wide-screen view (17×11 tiles) with pop-up windows which gave a more expansive feel to the world and also allowed more space for the roster and dialogue windows.

Another such design decision was using a class-free system, where your abilities and skills determine how well you succeed at fighting, magic, or other tasks, as opposed to a chosen class. This was inspired in part by a desire to have a robust thief and assassin character track, two classes which tend to suffer in many role-playing games from a lack of purpose other than lockpicking or back stabbing.

Nox Archaist runs on the bare metal, with no additional operating system such as DOS or ProDOS. Nevertheless, the file system is ProDOS compatible, thanks to Qkumba's ProRWTS disk drive controller. In addition to using less memory, ProRWTS is about

← APPENDIX →

seven times faster than the Woz RWTS from 1979. The fast disk reads allowed us to build a number of features into the Nox engine that would not have been practical with the 1979 RWTS controller. One example is special effects for spells: those lightning bolts and exploding fireballs are all being read from the disk on the fly.

The main game loop in Nox Archaist drives the bread-and-butter functions like animation and screen scrolling when the player moves. The loop also makes a call to an Event Manager subroutine which works in conjunction with the NoxTalk scripting language to create a subtle linear feel to the storyline within an otherwise open world design.

NoxTalk is an Apple II scripting language created by 6502 Workshop to facilitate efficient and robust dialog with NPCs. The language allows NPC interactions to set state flag values and be contingent upon those state flags. These state flags can be used to guide NPC interactions and even to make dramatic changes to the game world.

The pathfinding algorithm for NPCs is based on the A* algorithm which heavily influenced pathfinding in mid-1990s gaming and beyond. This algorithm works in the background by crawling around the map, finding its way around obstacles, to document a path between an NPC's current location and the desired future location.

We also pushed the frontier on the sound within the game. Back in the 1980s, Dr. Cat developed a prototype for 5-bit pulse-width modulated (PWM) sound on the Apple II and published it in Softdisk magazine. We were able to recreate this PWM technique and use it for the voice and booms during the splash screen, thus making this the first use of 5-bit PWM sound in a commercial Apple II game.

One of the more fun challenges was the Projectile Launcher Subroutine, which powers many of the spell effects. The subroutine is able to create spell shapes that span tile-grid boundaries and fly across the screen at any angle in an arcade-game-like fashion. Watch out for flying cows!

6502 WORKSHOP TEAM



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*Nox Ffred
Dev Team and Founder,
responsible for the game engine
and general programming,
game design, and project lead.*



MIKE REIMER

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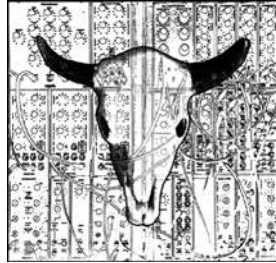
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Dev Team, Demo video music, soundtrack CD. Electric Moo spends his existence grazing the fields between inspiration, technology, and sound.



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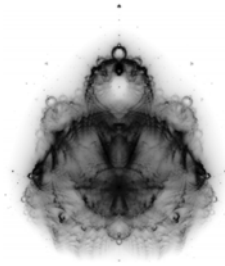
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Began as a game dev at Electronic Arts in 1995; one of the main devs on AppleWin. Worked on the tool chain, optimizations, and the splash screen.*



CHRIS TORRENCE

@CT6502

Dev Team, Project Advisor, Kickstarter video & campaign, game design, creation & production of reward items. Professional programmer; host of the Assembly Lines Podcast.



NOT ME

Causes most of the problems around here. Used to be in charge of marketing; strangely never seems to be around to accept responsibility. She's not just on the Brute Squad; she is the Brute Squad.

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SCROLLS OF NOBILITY

MASTER OF NOX

Vespertillio

LORDS OF THE REALM

Code Masseur

Carrington

COUNTS OF THE REALM

Anthony Paul

Ryan Musante

TSMMASTER

BARONS OF THE REALM

Chris Freeman	Petri Viaton
4am	Goldenflame
Alge	Røäthé
Shadow	Plextor
Dark Knight	Zark Dragon
Sir Dominus	Capt. Knight
DHAN CYEE	Ianoid
Eric o'Sheppy	Sir Bubba G
Farulosonoth	x56
MG Rommaker	Jarrodd Kailef
Malfunct	Breaddohrisin
Ales Canmore	Amasa
C. Galbreath	

The Queen would also like to acknowledge the residents of Castle Foolery, along with the hundreds of other members of the Order of Nox Archaist who kept the flame alive during the dark days of the Cult.

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QUICK REFERENCE

GENERAL & COMBAT

↑ ↓ ← → movement
SPACE pass turn
A attack
C cast spell
F fire cannon (ships only)
V volume/sound toggle
= toggle character icon
TAB display character roster
TAB+TAB display inventory

ADVENTURING

B board transport or mount
D dig (ruins only)
G get current location
H hide and camp
I ignite torch
J jump with your horse
L look
N new character order
O open or operate object
Q quick save game
S search
T talk to NPC
W wait
X exit transport or mount
Y yell, go fast on horse/mount
/ quest log
? keyboard shortcuts

COMBAT

P player-vs-player toggle
SHIFT+1-6 set active character
SHIFT+0 resume combat order
SHIFT+8 toggle combat math
+/- fast/slow scroll speed
8 pause text scroll
ESC flee from battle; exit combat

INVENTORY & SHOPPING

TAB switch to next menu
1-7 access menus by hotkey
↑ ↓ scroll through items
← → previous/next page
SPACE next character
SHIFT+1-6 choose character
RETURN ready/unready item
I information on item
U use an item
D discard item
B switch to buy menu (shop)
S switch to sell menu (shop)
RETURN buy or sell item (shop)
ESC exit inventory/shop

NPC DIALOG

Keywords **NAME, JOB, JOIN**
TAB toggle voice mode
ESC exit conversation

