

Greetings

*My name is Merlinus Ambrosius,
but men call me Merlin.*

*Aye, I live still, even unto this present day.
And I shall live on into worlds which you do not dream of,
but which I already see.*

*Legends tell you
that I was beguiled into a trap, imprisoned in a hollow hill,
a doddering old man blinded by misguided love
for a beautiful yet evil sorceress.*

Imprisoned I am, but not blinded — not now, or ever.

*But let me tell you of those days.
In a time almost before memory,
there was a battle among the gods.
The evil demon Nudd was defeated and chained
to a golden throne below a mountain.
Manacled though he was, his evil still extended
beyond the mountain, making the surrounding land barren,
and polluting everything it touched.
The enchantment he had cast over the Lady of the Lake
had such strength that even my gods
were powerless to break it.*

*Then a new god came into the land.
His power was so great that the spell over the lady
could be broken by the mere touch of the hawthorn flower
that was holy to him, the one that bloomed only
on the anniversary of his birth.*

*When Arthur was born,
he learned to embrace the power of the new god.
But he also knew that the old gods, my gods, were not dead.
Only thus was he able to gain the sword.*

*So look now at those days
through the eyes of the boy.
Learn of England's need for him
and how he came to write his name in legend.
I say to you, the day shall come when the world
has need of him once more. On that day
shall I break these icy bonds and rise to my destiny
— to bring new life, through fire and glory,
to the bravest and truest knight the world has ever known:
to Arthur — the once and future king.*

Preface to the Story

It has been many years since King Uther has died, and his once-proud kingdom is in danger of coming apart at the seams. No one has been able to draw the legendary sword from the stone. No one has been able to unite the country against the invasion of the Saxons. The people grow weary of life without a High King, and they are ready to accept a usurper on the throne, even though they know he is not the rightful heir.

In *Arthur*, you play the role of the young king who has grown up in ignorance of his heritage. The time has come for you to draw Excalibur from the stone and rise up to defend Britain. But before you can do so, you must prove to Merlin that you are ready to take up the burden of kingship. As you progress through the game, you must earn the wisdom, experience, and chivalry points that will demonstrate to Merlin that you are indeed ready to claim your birth-right.

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SECTION I: ABOUT ARTHUR

Using the New Interface

We've developed a new look for the screen to make our games even more enjoyable.

The lower part of the screen contains the command line and the traditional written account of what happens to you during the game.

The upper part of the screen contains your choice of any one of the following six windows. (Use the function keys specified to bring up these windows.)

Graphics: This is the default setting in which the game will start. No matter how far afield you roam, you will always be able to get a picture of where you are. (Function key 1)

Map: This feature maps the environment for you as you move through the game. The darkened square marks the room that you are currently in. The empty squares are rooms that you have previously explored. The compass rose displays all legitimate exits from your current location. If you have a mouse, see the "If You Have a Mouse" section for quick and easy ways to move around your once and future kingdom. (Function key 2)

Inventory: This window will display a list of all the things that you are carrying. (Function key 3)

Score: Your level of accomplishment is represented here, both in bar charts and in numbers. (Function key 4)

Room Description: This is useful if you want to take a quick glance at your surroundings without "wasting" a turn. The window displays the same information you would get if you typed LOOK. (Function key 5)

Text Only: For the hard-core, give-me-text-or-give-me-death gamer who would rather die than look at a picture. Return once more to those thrilling days of yesteryear — when men were men, text was text, and graphics got eaten by grues. (Function key 6)

The function keys on your machine are listed below:

- Apple IIe, IIc, IIs: Closed Apple/Option key pressed simultaneously with keys 1 through 6.
- Apple Macintosh: Command key pressed simultaneously with keys 1 through 6.
- Amiga: Keys F1 through F6.
- IBM-PC and compatibles: Keys F1 through F6.

Mapping

Arthur contains an on-screen mapping feature. When you want to see the map, press function key 2, which will bring up the map window (or simply type MAP). The map will show only those locations which you've already visited, as well as the then-current legitimate exits from those locations.

On the map, your current location will be a darkened square. If you have a mouse, you can move around the geography by clicking on an adjacent room or on the compass rose.

You may still want to draw your own map to keep track of where objects are found, and to be able to look at the entire *Arthur* geography at once.

If You Have a Mouse

If you have an Apple IIs or Macintosh, an Amiga, or an IBM with a Microsoft-compatible mouse, you can take advantage of several *Arthur* features.

You can use the mouse to move around the geography by clicking on an adjacent room in the map window, or by clicking on the appropriate point of the compass rose. (See the "Mapping" section above.)

In addition, you can use your mouse to navigate through the hint menu and to select hints.

Hints

Arthur contains on-screen hints! If you ever get stuck, simply go to Merlin's cave and look inside his crystal ball (or look into the crystal of the torque that Merlin drops on the ground at the beginning of the game). Then follow the instructions on your screen. The hints generally progress from a gentle nudge to a complete answer. Sometimes you will be told that there is an object or a piece of information that you haven't yet discovered. When that happens, return to the story and try another approach — sometimes a puzzle cannot be solved until you have solved another one first.

The hint system tries to be smart about where you have been and what you have seen. If you haven't seen or heard about the Bottomless Pit of Despair, then it will not show up as a hint topic until you do. This is to prevent you from learning about something's existence inadvertently when you consult the hint system on another matter. Thus, when you start the game, the list of topics in the hint system will be very small. But don't panic! As you progress, there will be more and more things you can consult the hint system about.

Despite the above, we strongly recommend that you look at only one hint at a time. Avoid the temptation to use the hints too often; this inevitably spoils, or at least lessens, the fun of solving a puzzle.

If you don't have the willpower to stop looking at the hints, you can type HINTS OFF. This will deactivate the on-screen hints (unless you RESTART or RESTORE to an earlier point).

Special Commands

Below are explanations for a number of useful one-word commands, with their abbreviated form following in parentheses. In many cases, these will not count as a move. Type the command after the prompt (>) and press the RETURN (or ENTER) key. Most of these commands appear in all Infocom games, but those that are starred (*) are new.

AGAIN (G) - This will repeat your previous input. For instance, typing ATTACK THE PLAID DRAGON then typing AGAIN would be like attacking the plaid dragon twice in a row.

BRIEF - This command tells *Arthur* not to give a full description each time you enter a location. In BRIEF mode, *Arthur* will fully describe a location only the first time you enter it. On subsequent visits, *Arthur* will tell you only the name of the location and any objects present. *Arthur* will begin in VERBOSE mode (see VERBOSE below) and will switch to BRIEF mode only if you type BRIEF. While you are in BRIEF mode, you can always get a full description of your location and the items there by typing LOOK.

***COLOR** - If you are playing *Arthur* on a computer with a color monitor, you can type COLOR to change the colors of the text and background on your screen.

INVENTORY (I) - *Arthur* will list what you are carrying and wearing.

LOOK (L) - This will give you a full description of your location.

***MAP** - This will bring up the map screen in the upper window.

***NOTIFY** - Normally in *Arthur*, the game will notify you when your score changes. You can turn off this notification feature by using the NOTIFY command. Typing NOTIFY a second time turns the feature back on.

OOPS (O) - If you mistype a word, such that *Arthur* doesn't understand it, you can correct yourself at the next prompt by typing OOPS and the correct word. For example, if you typed SHOOT THE HEDGHOG WITH THE CROSSBOW and were told "[You don't need to use the word 'hedghog']" you could type OOPS HEDGEHOG rather than retyping the entire sentence.

QUIT (Q) - This lets you stop. If you want to save your position before quitting, follow the instructions in the "Starting and Stopping" section on page 10.

***REFRESH (R)** - This command clears your screen and redraws the display.

RESTART - This stops the story and starts it over from the beginning.

RESTORE - This restores a previously saved position. See "Starting and Stopping" on page 10 for more details.

SAVE - This puts a "snapshot" of your current position on your save disk. You can return to a saved position in the future using the RESTORE command. See "Starting and Stopping" on page 10 for more details.

SCRIPT - This command tells your printer to begin making a transcript of the story. A transcript may aid your memory, but is not necessary, and will work only on certain computers. Read your Reference Card for details.

***UNDO** - You can use this command to "back up" one move. Suppose, for example, that you found a package but didn't know what was in it. You might type OPEN THE PACKAGE and be told "An evil mist escapes from the package and destroys all your possessions." You could then type UNDO, and you would "back up" one move. Your possessions would be intact, you could try giving the package to an enemy, or leaving it alone, or something else. Note that the UNDO command works only on certain computers with enough memory.

UNSCRIPT - This tells your printer to stop making a transcript.

VERBOSE - This command tells *Arthur* to give you the wordiest level of description. See BRIEF above.

VERSION - *Arthur* responds by showing you the release number and the serial number of your copy of the story. Please include this information if you ever report a "bug" in the story.

WAIT (Z) - This causes time in the story to pass. Normally, nothing happens in the game until you type a sentence and press RETURN (or ENTER). You could leave your computer, take a nap, eat dinner, and then return to the story to find that nothing has changed. You can use WAIT to make time pass in the story without doing anything. For example, if you saw two soldiers arguing, you might WAIT to see what they will do; if you were aboard a ship, you might WAIT to see where it goes; if you expected something interesting to happen at Easter, you could WAIT FOR EASTER. If something interesting happens while your waiting, you'll have the option to stop waiting.

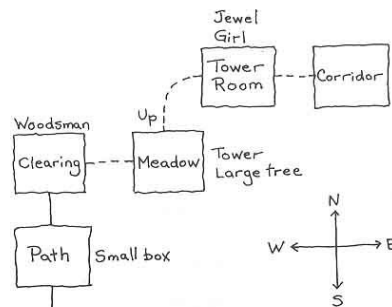
Abbreviations

The following is a list of abbreviations you can use for commonly used commands.

D - Down
E - East
G - Again
I - Inventory
L - Look
N - North
NE - Northeast
NW - Northwest
O - Oops
Q - Quit
R - Refresh
S - South
SE - Southeast
SW - Southwest
U - Up
W - West
X - Examine
Z - Wait

Sample Transcript

This transcript is not from *Arthur*, but it will give you a good feeling for how Infocom's interactive fiction works. It contains some simple puzzles and their solutions. The player's commands appear in capital letters after each prompt (>).



>LOOK
Path

Your quest for the Seven Lost Jewels of Nimnul has brought you to a path, deep within a dark forest. The path goes north and south from here.

You see a small box half-buried beneath a pile of leaves.

>TAKE THE BOX

Succumbing to the thieving instinct that drives adventurers such as yourself to steal anything that isn't tied down, you take the box.

>OPEN IT

You open the box. Inside is a small scrap of paper.

>EXAMINE PAPER

Most of the writing is illegible, but you can make out the following words:

"When thou wisheth to cause something to lose dimension, utter the ancient word 'Twerplotz'. Contrariwise, if thou desireth to cause a thing to become enlarged, then shalt thou say 'Blimpsnarf.'"

>NORTH
Clearing

You come to a clearing in the woods. A path leads to the south, and the way to the east is blocked by a thick hedge of thorns. There is a woodsman here, roasting a deer over a huge fire. You haven't eaten all day, and the hunk of meat he holds in his hand looks particularly appetizing.

>ASK WOODSMAN FOR MEAT

"Well now," says the woodsman. "There's enuf 'ere for two, but me father told me never to give up sump'n for nut'n. 'Ave ye got anything to offer?"

>INVENTORY

You are wearing an expensive cloak that is fastened at your neck with a copper pin.

You are carrying a sword, a small box, and an incredibly battered brass lantern that is so banged up from past adventures that it's a miracle it gives off any light at all.

>TRADE BOX FOR MEAT

You give the box to the woodsman and he gives you the meat. You wolf it down and your hunger disappears.

>THANK WOODSMAN

"No need for thanks," the woodsman says, holding up the box. "It's a fair enough trade."

>EAST

You wave a jaunty farewell to the woodsman, turn, and walk face-first into the hedge, impaling yourself on the thorns. You pry yourself free and do a quick impression of a sieve leaking blood, then fall to the greensward, dead.

***** You have died. *****

[Do you wish to RESTART, RESTORE, UNDO, QUIT, or get a HINT?]

>UNDO

[Undone]

>CUT HEDGE WITH SWORD

You hack away at the hedge with your sword. For every branch you chop off, two grow back in its place. The woodsman chuckles knowingly.